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# ARMS AND THE RACE



# ARMS AND THE RACE

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF ARMY REFORM

BY

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To  
HON. ELIHU ROOT,  
at one time Secretary of War and Reformer  
of the United States Army.





## PREFACE

In one way this book is an outcome of the war in Europe. Yet the opinions put forward are not the sudden creations of an overheated imagination. These opinions are based on historical study, and have found written or spoken form more than once in recent years for small audiences of special interests. There is little that is new here, save the appeal to a wider audience, and the piecing together by the light of recent events of a number of things which at first may seem unrelated, yet which irrefutably connect Marlborough and Frederick the Great with the present secretary of war of the United States!

It has been distasteful to have to

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designate Powers like Japan and Germany. A rhetorical veil might have been spread over them, and I might have referred continuously to "a great Asiatic Power," or "a militarist state in Europe." On the whole it did not appear worth while. In fact it seemed to vitiate fundamentally the position here taken up, which is to discuss a vital national problem in the most direct and precise way possible, avoiding the vague generalities with which the public must by now be quite satiated. What is said of Germany, of Japan, and of other Powers, implies no unfriendliness, merely an attempt to state facts, sometimes unpleasant, as accurately as possible.

I must further explain that I have all through put to one side as much as I could the question of the navy. Yet the

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problem of national defense is essentially a mixed one. But the fact is that we have a navy, and have not an army; and until we have an army no correct adjustment of these questions is possible. I have therefore confined myself as far as possible to the elements or foundations of our military problem.

National armament is rapidly becoming a party question. One who approaches the matter as a student cannot but regret this, because the facts are so important to the country as a whole. It is in this spirit that they are put forward; and it may be added that nothing here stated is drawn from sources not wholly accessible to the public. The opinions expressed are personal and not in any appreciable sense the result of consultation with others.



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# **ARMS AND THE RACE**





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## CHAPTER I

### ARMIES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

**A**T the epoch, not so very remote, of the Declaration of American Independence, armies were viewed differently from to-day. With some reservations as to the British army, every armed force was regarded as an essential prerogative and instrument of a monarch. It belonged to him in a personal and exclusive sense, as an unquestioned privilege. It was therefore, in the last analysis, the foundation of the established order of things in Europe; incidentally, it was an instrument for territorial acquisition.



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But, as the public saw things, the constant factor was tacitly accepted, while its incident appeared the chief matter. Autocratic monarchy was reckoned a divine ordinance and hardly worth discussing, while interest centered in military activities provoked by far less important matters, ranging all the way from the point of honor of the sovereign to the economic advantage of the nation as a whole.

Take the Bourbons in 1781, the year of Yorktown and of Necker's *Compte Rendu*. Up to that time it had never occurred to any one in France that the Bourbon accounts or the Bourbon army concerned any one but the monarch. His tax-raised revenue was his own and beyond the range of investigation in the same sense as the income of any private individual. And from this revenue he

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maintained, at what was thought of as his personal expense, just what number of soldiers he saw fit. Even though financial chaos and bankruptcy threatened, even though the American war was costing enormous sums, no criticism was offered until in that year, 1781, Necker, on being dismissed from office, issued his epoch-making *Compte Rendu*. It was a halting, incomplete, inaccurate attempt to state the financial situation of the kingdom. The question was now raised: Is finance royal or national? The Estates General replied eight years later by a decree that pledged the national credit for the national debt.

No finances, no army. The nationalization of the one inevitably resulted in the nationalization of the other. The French army, long unpaid and in the

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hands of a kindly and unenergetic monarch, failed to maintain the old order in July, 1789, and a year later found itself under a new allegiance: to the Nation, the Law, and the King. This was perhaps the decisive act of the French Revolution. But the public missed its full significance, still accustomed to the superficial view that an army was for the most part concerned with external war, whether of ambition or of economic interest.

The army of the Bourbons was fairly representative of the European armies of that time. The King of Prussia, the Emperor, the King of Sardinia, the Republic of Venice, the King of Spain, the Russian Tsar, all maintained armies of the same general type. And as these armies were thought of in their personal relations to a sovereign, it followed that

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a soldier's qualification was almost wholly disconnected with the place of his birth. A soldier was a professional man who served wherever he found good pay and conditions; and a Swiss infantryman might hesitate as to whether to enlist with the King of France, the King of Naples, or the Pope, very much as a German chemist might hesitate to-day as to whether to seek a job in Lancashire, in Massachusetts, or in Normandy. Switzerland bred as good soldiers as were to be found in Europe; they could command high pay in any capital. Hesse was turned into the most productive of soldier farms by her thrifty electors, who took to the lucrative business of battalion contractors. As the army of Louis XVI marched on Paris in July, 1789, its heads of columns were not French: they were formed by

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such regiments as Nassau, Royal-Etranger, Esterhazy, Diesbach, Royal-Allemand, Reinach, Royal-Cravate; while the general in command was a Swiss. The Duke of Brunswick's columns in 1792 were not appreciably more foreign, and were viewed by the people of Paris much as their monarch's army had been viewed three years earlier.

It must not be supposed, however, that eighteenth-century armies in Continental Europe were purely professional and non-national. It is merely a matter of emphasis. For if one were considering the question in close detail, it would be necessary to dwell on the militia organizations that were called on to play a part occasionally, as in France and Prussia. Again, levies of an even more primitive description, such as those

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of the Hungarian horse, tended to give war at times a more national character. But these were not the outstanding facts. Speaking broadly, an army belonged to its monarch, and the soldier was a professional expert, and often, non-national.

Just as the army belonged to the monarch, so did the regiment belong to its colonel, and the company to its captain. But here we come to a matter in which variation was great among the different armies. Improvements were being made in this system which was, on the whole, a pernicious survival from the seventeenth century. It will be stated, therefore, in a purely formal sense, and more to give an impression of the views of the epoch than to cover conditions existing at any one place and time.

A regiment or a company was a ben-

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efice in very much the same sense as a bishopric or deanery. The king paid the colonel so much for his regiment; the colonel paid the captain so much for his company. At each of these steps profits were made; in fact, the whole business of war and army management was full of petty fees and profits, so that the term professional soldier was, even in that sense, entirely justified. The emoluments, like in most professions, went to those nearest the top of the ladder; so that it paid to buy a position higher up, and a complicated system of purchase of commissions crept in, which in the English army survived to within half a century of our own time.

Under these conditions a commission as an officer was naturally enough a privilege reserved to men of rank. As



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the king owned the army, so did the aristocracy monopolize the commissions. In France, four quarterings of nobility were necessary for holding officers' rank; and an able soldier but a plebeian like Jourdan might distinguish himself pre-eminently, as he did in the trenches at Yorktown, and yet remain a sergeant. Under the Republic, the same man might rise to command a great national army and win one of the decisive victories of European history; as Jourdan did at Fleurus in 1794. At the time of the War of the Spanish Succession the Hohenzollerns were not above contracting out their army, under the command of Crown Prince Frederick William, to the Allies. The Elector of Hesse, on a smaller scale, went into the same sort of business. As late as 1855 we find England attempting to hire the Sardinian

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army. On a smaller scale, colonels are military contractors. They supply the king with a regiment. It is made up of professional soldiers; and is recruited by other professional soldiers who drift in, or by new recruits who soon learn to conform with the high standard they see all about them. War decimates these regiments; but it also ravages the country and turns peasants to soldiering, who come in as recruits.

The expansion of armies for war emergencies was a slow process and not at all comparable with the modern system founded by Scharnhorst. Larger sums were made available with which to enter into more contracts with suppliers of troops. Old and new hands were attracted by the prospect of fighting, and especially of the incidents of fighting. From the French army statistics the fol-

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lowing figures will show the nominal numbers of the Bourbon army in alternate years of peace and war.

<i>Peace</i>	<i>War</i>
1726. . . . 160,000	1733. . . . 205,000
	1734. . . . 303,000
1739. . . . 200,000	1742. . . . 400,000
1749. . . . 140,000	1756. . . . 290,000
	1759. . . . 330,000
1775. . . . 128,000	

The cost of this army, so far as the imperfect figures will serve, appears to have oscillated from about 35 to 168 millions of francs. In 1775 the figure is 98 millions.

Turning to England we note differences. The army was broken in the monarch's hand as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. And the struggle of the Commonwealth against

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the Crown was maintained by the same iron stock which in that epoch succeeded in colonizing New England. When the Stuarts were driven out, the question of the army took on a new aspect. The sovereigns that followed were far more disposed to follow constitutional courses. England had become involved in continental wars with Holland, with Spain, with France. She struggled for commercial advantages, and the control of the sea; she resisted the planting of a strong power among the inlets and havens that faced the Thames from Antwerp to Dunkirk. Such a policy required an army, and therefore England reluctantly, suspiciously, entrusted William III and his successors with the forces that appeared to be called for by the passing circumstances.

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Although the British monarchs of the eighteenth century maintained an army similar in many ways to those of the Continental States, there were at bottom important differences. Financial control reposed in the House of Commons from the year 1689. The King's power had already in large measure passed to the Cabinet. Yet the army was viewed with jealousy, and the militia, successor of the older train-bands that had fought for the Commonwealth, was viewed as the national as opposed to the royal force. The Tory country gentlemen, none too zealous on behalf of the Hanoverian dynasty, officered the militia. It was not an efficient force even after some training as at the time of the Seven Years' War and at the time of Napoleon; but it long continued immensely popular as the hypothetical

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bulwark of the British constitution against a hypothetical tyrant.

These ideas evoked a natural echo from America. When the colonists revolted from the mother country nothing proved more distasteful for them than to carry their decision to its logical conclusion, the formation of an army. The armed farmers of Lexington were well enough, but when it became necessary to supplement their well-meant but untutored and sporadic efforts by the formation of regular Continental troops, enthusiasm waned fast. Some aspects of the War of Independence will be noticed in a later chapter. For the present it will suffice to say that at the close of the war and during the period that followed, American sentiment towards the army reflected pretty closely the conditions that surrounded

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armies in Europe. It was natural, in fact inevitable, that a standing army should be thought of as an engine of tyranny, and more or less useless for any other purpose. Had not the English sovereigns from Charles I to George III, for a century and a half, employed armed force to assert their will against their subjects? Was not an army by the nature of military command an aristocratic institution?

As a result of these wholly justified prejudices the United States proved on the whole ungrateful in the treatment awarded to the brave men who gave their blood for independence. Although Washington plainly declared and frequently repeated that the militia had actually done more harm than good to the cause, the second clause of the Constitution was drawn as follows:

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“A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” It is needless to point out that this maintained the English distinction between the constitutional and the royal force. Another aspect of the matter is echoed by such provisos as the one still skulking in the Massachusetts constitution, whereby officers must be elected by their men. By such means democracy might be strengthened; and tyranny resisted. Yet it will be seen later that, as times changed, other and unforeseen dangers just as serious as these might be run into.

The land army, then, was viewed as an instrument of tyranny; the sea army was in different case. And the sea army was perhaps the more potent fac-



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tor in the intercourse of nations. "Admiral Mahan has laid down in terms that are perhaps too sweeping an argument for the supremacy of sea power over land power. It is true to say that the factor represented by sea power had been much neglected by historians before he so brilliantly called attention to it. But it is also true to say that the decisiveness of sea power has not been quite so constant as he claims, and that it must vary in every conflict with the general situation of the combatants. Obviously, a struggle between Servia and Bulgaria might not be in any way affected by sea power, while one between England and Germany must be so inevitably.

"But Admiral Mahan has rarely been happier than when pointing out how unemphatic, subtle, and underlying is the

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influence of sea power. And there lies one of its chief differences from land power. From 1805 to 1812 the world viewed Napoleon as a giant and England as a pigmy; yet, if sea power was really more decisive than land power, then in reality the case was the opposite. The truth lies, of course, in Admiral Mahan's observation that the impression and effect of sea power are less obvious, less insistent." <sup>1</sup>

Now from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the present day England has maintained a sea militarism of an extreme character. For it has during most of this time rejected equality with its opponents and attempted, with general success, to maintain superiority and supremacy. Yet this sea power,

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, "Three Hundred Years of War." *Infantry Journal*, November, 1914.

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that for a century and a half dominated all the world and created the greatest empire yet seen, never provoked the fears and jealousy that were felt for the eighteenth-century army. For a fleet arises from commerce. Its home is the ocean. It neither helps the despot nor threatens the citizen. And in the attitude of the American citizen of the present day towards fleets and armies, these old eighteenth-century ideas and prejudices are still quite apparent. We put our hands in our pockets without too much reluctance, with some relish even, to build such a nice mechanical toy as a dreadnought.—But a regiment of soldiers?—Never!

## CHAPTER II

### THE ART OF WAR

**W**AR as an art reaches its apogee, in modern times, with the eighteenth century. Marlborough marks the beginning, Frederick the middle, Bonaparte the close of the epoch. Nowadays, in western Europe at all events, war is no longer an art; it is rather an economic function. The nation is armed and crowded to the frontier while an economic adjustment of vast proportions supplies its thousand needs, and attempts to maintain some sort of equilibrium behind. A hundred years ago, things were very different.

The eighteenth-century army, as an

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instrument in the hands of its general, may be compared to the eighteenth-century orchestra. Starting on a basis of string instruments, the woods were gradually developed from the time of Montaverde to Mozart, while with Beethoven, at the close of the century, the brass comes into its own, and the three great parts of the orchestra, amply developed, give the composer ample means for deploying the resources of his art. A somewhat similar evolution took place with the three great arms of the modern army: infantry, cavalry, artillery.

Infantry, before the eighteenth century, was normally made up in varying proportions of pikemen and musketeers. The pikemen held off the cavalry, or charged an enemy in position. The musketeers held the opposing cavalry

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at distance or occupied woods, ditches and flank positions, and tended to develop a direct attack by fire. At the turn of the century a shortened pike shaft was stuck into the muzzle of a musket and then developed into a socket bayonet, so that the pikeman and musketeer were amalgamated. A unit of say 300 pikemen and 300 musketeers was converted by this invention into a unit of 600 pikemen and 600 musketeers. In other words, the value of infantry was numerically doubled.<sup>1</sup>

In Marlborough's campaigns during the Wars of the Spanish Succession, cavalry and infantry were of about equal value in the shock of battle, and the use of cavalry in the front line is distinctive of this great master of the art

<sup>1</sup> An amusing illustration of our consistently antiquated notions of war is that so late as 1812, the 15th Infantry was for a time armed with pikes!

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of war and of his epoch. But infantry was rapidly acquiring the predominance it has since retained on the battlefield. Material improvements in the musket made the arm more effective. And the increasing rigor of drill and precision in manœuvring, especially in Prussia, soon relegated cavalry to a secondary, though still highly important part. The artillery arm was as yet of little account for field operations.

Frederick the Great brought the infantry arm to a point it has not since surpassed. It could maintain tactical cohesion under a terrific fire, on the widest front, and in complicated formations. No infantry ever equaled it in its power of forcing a decision of the combat by manœuvring against a given point and under the most violent conditions. To understand this better it

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may be as well to clear away a misunderstanding widespread among popular lecturers as to the relation between improved armaments and destruction of life in battle.

As a general proposition it may be laid down that the less destructive the weapon the greater will be the loss of life; and the history of war gives ample confirmation to the theory.<sup>2</sup> Arm two groups of six men with knives, and tell them to get a decision: the loss of life will inevitably be heavy, and the decision rapid. Arm the same groups each with a quick firing gun: the loss of life will in nine cases out of ten be smaller, and the decision may be long

<sup>2</sup> Loss of life per hour of fighting in battle decreases steadily from about the middle of the eighteenth century to the present time. No exact statistical formula for this can be given, but in a rough sense it is a decrease of something like 8 per cent. to an eighth of 1 per cent.



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postponed. With weak arms the decision must be sought at short range and a system of discipline and tactics must be evolved that will meet this necessity. With powerful weapons the emphasis changes; it becomes increasingly necessary to protect human life instead of risking it; tactics are modified, distances are increased, and loss decreases correspondingly. The illusion is widespread, nevertheless, that modern weapons cause greater loss of life than those used in earlier days. This illusion proceeds from various causes. The incident of a local surprise where the modern weapon does its destructive work, is extended to represent the norm of the whole shock between two armies, which it does not. The illusion also proceeds from ignoring the relation of tactics to armaments and

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from the magnifying effect of the modern press. The fact remains that a blunderbuss, in the evolution of war, is a more effective weapon than a high-power, small-bore rifle, because the former was used at ten feet, where the latter is used at a thousand yards.

The musket in Frederick's day was already capable of discharging several shots a minute, but it lacked power and accuracy. Although it might range a good deal beyond 200 yards, yet that distance was generally regarded as the practical limit of the field of fire within which the decision could be reached. Every twenty yards advance within that distance was a distinct gain in fire power. The ultimate aim of the commander was to obtain so close a position and to deliver so smashing a discharge as to break the opposing line at

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one blow. Such was the "perfect volley" on the plains of Abraham in 1759. If volleys could be delivered either by units or by the whole line, as at Leuthen, from an enfilading position, so much the better.

Under these circumstances it was necessary to bring the infantry into battle in such a way as to develop the greatest possible quantity of fire at the shortest possible range and at the most favorable angle possible. This was effected by deploying extended lines of infantry, drilled to fear the sergeant who walked behind stick in hand more than the enemy's guns; and manœuvring with such rapidity and accuracy as to be able to snatch any favorable opportunity for gaining the enfilading position while maintaining the general alignment. Frederick was extraordinarily

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successful in persuading his soldiers to “*respecter le bâton*,” as he pleasantly put the dilemma between facing the bullet or the cat o’ nine tails. At Leuthen, at Rossbach, he demonstrated what pulverizing results a small but highly drilled professional army could obtain through the application of those parade-ground manœuvres of which he held the secret.<sup>3</sup>

Frederick generally strove for a pitched battle, or quick results. The size of his army, the nature of his manœuvres, and the character of the ground in the country he fought over, all helped to make central control of the army and direct supervision by the general possible. Infantry though broken up into battalions, and even on occasion

<sup>3</sup> Frederick’s peace manœuvres were carried out secretly behind a cordon of pickets.

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into larger groups, was handled as a whole. The subordinate generals and officers were more concerned with maintaining alignments and relative positions and directions than with utilizing broken ground, which was avoided, or exercising any initiative. The preoccupation of the military art was tactical in the strictest sense.

Soon after the close of the Seven Years' War came important modifications in the artillery arm, which hitherto had lagged far behind the others. These reforms took place in France, and the officer whose name is most closely associated with them was de Gribeauval. He succeeded in reducing the weight of the gun, thereby increasing its mobility and rendering it capable of following infantry over broken ground. He gave it greater

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muzzle velocity, while reducing the charge; in fact, almost made a new weapon of it. At the same time he and others were experimenting with grape, which became more destructive. These changes brought the artillery arm up to the level of the other two, and by disarranging the balance then existing brought about a change in theoretical tactics; in fact, in the whole theory of war. General du Teil was teaching these theories at the artillery school at Auxonne at the time when the French Revolution broke out, and young Bonaparte, a sub-lieutenant of artillery, was quartered there and became one of his favorite students.

The new theory ran along the following lines. Guns can now follow the infantry fight and shift position rapidly. They can also deliver a greater volume

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of fire at increased ranges. That being so, if operations are being conducted in country broken by natural obstacles, numerous positions can be found where a few guns supported by detachments of the other arms, can hold at bay large numbers of deployed infantry. Again, if one could concentrate, by good use of ground, the fire of a number of guns on a given point of the enemy's line, then a breach might be made, much as in the attack of a fortress, and a victory won. Napoleon acted on this theory in the great grape shot attacks of his later campaigns; and even before Napoleon, Carnot adopted the theory of the new school by breaking up his armies into divisions of the three arms, self-sustaining because of the increased value and radius of fire.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The French began experimenting with divisional organizations some years before this.

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Every increase of the power of the defensive has presented the recurring problem: how, then, is a decision to be got? Napoleon found an answer. If the shock was to be less easy to force, less decisive, spread over more ground and more time, then could not tactics be supplemented by strategy? Could not an army be so handled as to obtain an advantage which might prove decisive even before the tactical shock occurred?

“Marengo illustrates admirably the strategic conception that overcomes tactical disability. Between the two armies that met on that field there was no comparison in point of discipline and of manœuvring power in terms of minor tactics. The French army was wretchedly inadequate to the business in hand. A large proportion of the in-



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fantry was green. Some of the men had not even received muskets, while many had had muskets dealt out to them on the march through Switzerland and were only just beginning to get correct notions as to which end should be pointed at the enemy. As soon as Austrians and French were fairly deployed face to face the result, tactically, was not in doubt for an instant. And it was only because the Austrians, superior also in numbers, carelessly blundered after apparently winning an easy victory, only because Desaix and Kellermann struck an unexpected, clever, and lucky blow, that Melas did not camp on the battlefield. But the remarkable thing was that all this mattered very little, because Bonaparte had got a decisive strategic result before he even attempted to get a tactical one.

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“The strategic manœuver of Napoleon was far more akin to the conceptions of von Moltke than to those of Frederick. The disposition of troops in France and Italy for a strategic purpose; the rapid march to Milan; the fan-like spread of the French divisions to cover all roads whereby Melas could get back to his line of communications; the occupation of the Stradella Pass, easy of defense but with no ground really suited to the deployment of an army; all of these were features that belonged to an era of greatly increased power in fire arms, of the fractioning of armies into self-sustaining parts. For these reasons the strategic advantage which Napoleon obtained by the rapidity of his concentration and preliminary manœuver was decisive, and a tactical set-back was not at all likely to

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prove serious with the ground and the strategic situation of the armies what they were.”<sup>5</sup>

We thus have a development of armaments, and a new theory of war to mark the close of the century. But this was not all, for the same epoch witnessed a large increase in the size of armies together with a lowering of the efficiency of the infantry arm. But this topic belongs to the next chapter, in which the displacement of professional by national armies will be discussed. For the present, we may say that under the new conditions Bonaparte showed a genius for war that raised him at the close of his first campaign to the select company of the great captains. War still remained an art. From his saddle

<sup>5</sup> Johnston, “What Could Napoleon Accomplish To-Day?” *Nineteenth Century*, December, 1914.

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the commander could still follow the evolutions of his army on the field, could control all its divisions, could ring the changes on all the combinations of horse, foot, and guns. If the infantry was less steady, it was quicker in its movements; if the cavalry was less regular, it had more initiative; while the guns were constantly gaining in importance. "There is no natural order of battle," declared Napoleon. But out of the newborn confusion and scurry the Corsican's logical mind could always evoke the massed blow or circling swoop that presaged the flight of the enemy.

Let us sum up. The eighteenth century is the age of military despots, ruling great countries. But those countries have not yet come to national consciousness and accept more or less the

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divine right of their rulers. Force is in an immediate sense the stabilizing medium of society; and force is concentrated in the sovereign's hands. The professional army takes the natural enough mold of a caste. The aristocrat is the officer; and he commands a well-defined class of man, the professional soldier. Together they rise, before the outbreak of the Revolution, to an extraordinary pitch of professional attainment and courage; while the art of war develops the most severe contacts and hazardous adjustments. Craft and science and intrepidity in boundless measure are to be found in the men who reach the pinnacle of the most terrifying of the arts. Marlborough at Blenheim, Frederick at Leuthen, Napoleon at Austerlitz, tasted in their supreme form the joy which primitive

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man feels in combat, but combat transformed into its most polished possibilities. The French Revolution was destined to change all that, to change war so profoundly that even the greatest of generals proved unable to keep up with the transformation.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NATIONAL ARMY

**B**Y successive stages, between the 14th of July, 1789, and the 14th of October, 1806, the professional army of the eighteenth century was shattered by the rising tide of nationalism. On the first of these dates the people of Paris imposed their will on Louis XVI, who withdrew his troops from their gates, and on the second the conscript army of France destroyed the splendid fighting machine which Frederick had bequeathed to his successors. After this, the professional army disappears in Continental Europe.

When the French National Assem-

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bly took over the army from the King, the rank and file were already much demoralized. Pay was heavily in arrears; mutiny was in the air; seditious ideas were being propagated. The Assembly completed the work by making it illegal under certain conditions for the soldier to obey his superior, and by suppressing the foundation of the whole edifice of the current infantry tactics, the cat o' nine tails. The soldier was now a citizen in the enjoyment of the rights of a free man, and he might not be subjected to punishments derogatory to his new-born privileges and dignity.

All this was, of course, quite as it should be. But it had a drawback. The quality of the French army was reduced, its discipline was seriously affected. It became immensely more difficult to bring infantry up to the tac-



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tical shock, and that at the very moment when the increase in the intensity and range of fire apparently demanded of troops an even greater degree of energy and tactical cohesion than in the past. The upshot was that when the First Republic became involved in war with the rest of Europe, its armies proved much inferior to those of the Bourbon monarchy.

How was it then that the Republic fought its way to eventual success, that it saved its existence at Valmy and Fleurus, and imposed its will on its enemies at Mantua, Zurich and Hohenlinden? There were four chief reasons: 1°. the artillery; 2°. the new art of war; 3°. the social revolution; 4°. numbers. Let us glance at each of these in turn.

At Valmy, two days before the Re-

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public was proclaimed, the Duke of Brunswick apparently had the French army at his mercy; but the great concentration of batteries along the French front made him hesitate and finally decline to attack. One of the decisive victories of history had been won at a cost to the victors of less than two per cent. in killed and wounded. The excellence of the artillery, from which arm the greatest of French generals was soon to emerge, played a great part in all the campaigns that followed in stiffening the armies of the Republic.

When those armies had begun to find themselves, let us say towards the close of the year 1793, they revealed certain peculiarities, some defects and some qualities. For one thing, they were ragged and unkempt, inadequately clothed and equipped. The

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Government was bankrupt; transport and rations failed. What was an army to do under those circumstances? What the French army did was to neglect parade and appearances; to devote more time to marching and forestalling the enemy; and to live on the country. All this meant rapid movement and a greater capacity for obtaining strategic advantages, thereby balancing in a measure tactical weakness.

But whatever strategical advantage an army may obtain, there always comes the moment when the tactical decision must be fought for. The artillery could not do the business alone. How was one to get the best results from the French infantry on the field? To deploy that infantry on a wide front developing its musketry fire to the fullest extent would clearly be useless

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against the more rigidly trained infantry that would have to be faced. Even at Jena, in 1806, deployed French infantry could not stand against the Prussians when they met fairly face to face. Discipline had been lowered far too much to leave the French on anything like equal terms at that game. If, however, battle were joined on ground that was fairly broken, then skirmishers and small columns, strongly backed by mobile guns and cavalry, might effect something. And the small column came into large use and typified better than anything else the changes brought about by the Revolution.

A column of a half battalion was one of the easiest formations to teach a raw soldier; easiest in which to retain tactical control or cohesion; easiest in which

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to manœuvre with rapidity from one position to another.<sup>1</sup> Then again, in this sort of formation, it was the head of the column that counted for everything. A dozen officers and non-commissioned officers and a dozen brave soldiers in the lead might carry along several hundred skulkers and cowards in a dash on the enemy. Now the Revolution had ordained that its armies should be made up of a large undisciplined mass, inclined therefore to skulk, and of a small proportion of men before whom it had set the greatest of human prizes. The private soldier might rise to the highest command; and he did. A sub-lieutenant of artillery became an emperor; a private dragoon became a king and so did a simple gren-

<sup>1</sup> Space forbids a sufficient explanation of the difficulties attending line manœuvres of the Frederickian period, and of the questions of time involved.

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adier; several private soldiers became Marshals of France. These were the men who carried the tricolor at the heads of the charging columns, and gave the French armies, notwithstanding the skulkers, their irresistible quality. It was the fanaticism of the social revolution.

This fanaticism of the social revolution took on an aspect which may be summed up in a word of much import for the evolution of armies in the nineteenth century, the word initiative. Initiative in the general sense of the word was the bold individualism of the men who by their example lent force and coherence to the armed mob. It was the great quality of the Army of Italy in 1796; and it might have become in an organized form a great force in the armies of the Empire; we shall see

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presently why things took a different turn.

One more reason needs stating to explain the victories of the armies of the Republic: they generally outnumbered their opponents, and it was as well, for they sometimes required a preponderance of two to one to succeed. If the nation could not be saved by the old army, then let every citizen arm himself and fly to the frontier! The response to this appeal was excellent in 1791, moderately good in 1792 and even in 1793. But after that, difficulties grew; until in 1798 the first real conscription law was passed. Under this system, which was soon copied throughout the Continent, the armed nation was deliberately substituted for the older standing army. Before examining the institution at work during

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the following fifteen years, we may first note that the fundamental character of the change passed almost unnoticed. It was a time of stress and passion. The new France, stained with blood, tarnished with bankruptcy, desperately facing the brink of destruction, was driven to any and every means for preserving her hard-won institutions. So conscription passed as an emergency measure for strengthening the army, merely as an extreme means for meeting a ruinous situation.

But what did conscription really signify? Take the answer in terms reaching from the French measure of 1798 to what we see in this year 1915. It meant substituting the ordinary citizen for the professional soldier; it meant sending up to the firing line not men ready and willing to face the supreme



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risk but men for the most part with no such disposition, ordinary citizens, professional men, lawyers, merchants, artists, even in one country to-day, priests. It is a shocking thing that modern civilization should arrive at such a system as that. Yet in the working of the system valid distinctions can be drawn, as will appear in later chapters. For there is a gulf between a State in which the conscript soldier can be spoken of as *pulverfutter*, food for cannon, and the State in which he is a neighbor among neighbors, armed for the defense of his home and with no aggressive intent.

Let us turn once more to the art of war, and consider how these matters, particularly numbers, affected its conduct. Bonaparte became master of France in the year following that in which conscription was established.

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In 1805 began the wars of the Empire, and by the following year a vast increase in the size of the French armies set in. Steadily they grew until in 1812 Napoleon, whose first army had amounted to less than 50,000 men, found himself at the head of half a million. It is interesting to consider this fact in connection with two things: the generalship of Napoleon, and the growth of national armies.

With Napoleon what we find is this: He is unwilling to recognise that the growth of armies, and the widening of strategic and tactical areas, demand a system of command different from that which had obtained during all the centuries. He is further unwilling to recognise that the plan for employing a large national army demands a different sort of reasoning from that for

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employing a small professional one. And in his struggle against Russia he is half blind to the fact that even adding strategy to tactics does not cover the function of war, but that it may, under given circumstances, become a duel in terms of economic resources.

It is sometimes difficult to disentangle in Napoleon what is logical from what is merely craving for power. Unity was one of these double-faced obsessions. There must be unity of command. There must never be two armies in the same field of operations. The first statement might, under conditions, be true. The second could not remain true under the extension of warfare then proceeding. More than one army has to be employed in the field of operations of 1805, Napoleon's and Masséna's; more than one in 1809,

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Napoleon's and Prince Eugene's; more than one in 1813. But he tries not to see the truth; he clings desperately to his old ideal of the hero-despot who from the saddle controls the military drama in its entirety as it unfolds before him.

In 1812 he set out to defeat Russia by the sheer accumulation of numbers against her; just as de Gribeauval believed in accumulating fire and battering a hole at a given point. But the scale is wholly unsuitable, and in more than one way. He writes to Davoût: "The object of all my manœuvres is to concentrate 400,000 men at a given point." Again a pure obsession, and hopeless in practice. For at that moment he had before him two widely separated Russian armies, in a vast theater of war of scanty resources, and those

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armies amounted one to 100,000 men, the other to 50,000 men. A concentration of 400,000 men at either of these points, if feasible, was merely the gratification of an inordinate craving for mass and for power; as a practical measure it could only lead to the paralyzing of the army from undue concentration in a poor country, while the numbers were too large to serve any adequate purpose.

Then again, following up the same line of thought, we find Napoleon attempting to handle the main army of invasion on a single line of supply. And that line of supply, overstrained by its burden, broke down at the very outset of the campaign. With von Moltke, a very different mode of thought would have prevailed. No attempt would have been made to concentrate against

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the Russian armies a larger force than one sufficient to defeat them. The army would have been broken up into several groups of quicker action because smaller; and it would have been backed by troops of the second line to make secure the lines of communication and to obtain firm possession of the country behind the field army.

If Napoleon displayed unwillingness to devise new methods to meet new conditions, the reason is easily found in his inordinate craving for power. He grasps, but does not construct. Long before armies had swollen to immense proportions, he had shown a jealous fear of entrusting power to others. Apart from Masséna, Davoût, Soult, Lannes, Murat, few of his marshals or generals ever knew their master's intentions. They feared, and obeyed orders

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in a literal sense. Initiative was slowly and surely paralyzed, and that at the very time when the necessity for some means of coördinating the movements of greater armies over vast areas became more and more pressing.

The Prussians, under the spur of their disasters, began learning at the point where Napoleon left off. Even before Jena they had begun to perceive that with increased armies something rather more elaborate than a one-man command was necessary for effective control. For many years there had been a staff, in the sense of a quartermaster's and an adjutant's office. Towards the close of the eighteenth century this developed into a body of officers trained, among other things, in reconnoissance duties and the guiding of troops.

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Von Massenbach, who was later Chief of Staff to Prince Hohenlohe in the Jena campaign and earned the name of the "evil genius of Prussia," initiated reforms just before the Jena campaign that were carried further by Scharnhorst in the years following that disaster. A staff corps on modern lines was developed, and so rapidly did it progress that one of the best German staff officers of recent times declared that "the work done by the Headquarter Staff of the Silesian Army [1813-14] may be taken as an example of efficiency even at the present day."<sup>2</sup> Officers were trained in the technical details of the control of armies during field operations. And while the topographical work naturally plays a large

<sup>2</sup> Bronsart von Schellendorf, "Duties of the General Staff." War Office, London.



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part in the early history of this organization, it is interesting to note from the earliest days the insistence on the higher education of army officers for field duties and on the fundamental importance of the Historical Section of the General Staff.

Scharnhorst is probably less well known for his development of the General Staff system, or system of army control by groups of experts, than by his organization of the new model Prussian army. By the treaty of Tilsit in 1807 Napoleon dictated to Prussia the reduction of her army to 42,000 men and no more. Prussia was not prepared to accept her virtual relegation among the minor States, and determined to regain her position among the nations. To effect this purpose an army of 42,000 men, whatever degree

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of perfection it might be brought to, was clearly useless. Numbers were necessary. The problem then was how, while keeping no more than 42,000 men with the colors, to be able to place a large army in the field in case of war.

Scharnhorst's solution of the problem brings us to another and an essential feature of the national army: the system of expansion through reserves. Since Scharnhorst's day it has been adopted in some form or other by every nation in the world, except the United States, which still retains an army of eighteenth-century design. And it is the most pacific and complete democracy of Europe, Switzerland, that has carried the system to its logical and extreme conclusion.

The Prussian device was quite simple. It merely consisted in treating

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the 42,000 not as an army, but as the skeleton of an army. By having a large proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers, by providing the arms and supplies and battalion organizations for three, four, and even five times the number of men present, it was possible to train men in as brief a time as possible, and then to pass them out of the ranks as trained reservists liable to be called up in time of war. So well did the system work that in 1813, when it had barely had the time to show results, Prussia succeeded in getting a quarter of a million of men in the field. The troops were of poor quality, of course; they would have horrified Frederick. But intense patriotism, the doggedness of Blücher, and the immense services of the General Staff in coördinating the efforts of the army,

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pulled it through to the great triumph of Leipzig.

It may therefore be said that the national army, full fledged, as we find it at the fall of Napoleon, presents the following characteristics: It has large numbers; the training is hasty; the quality of the line is poor; the effective direction and control of its masses requires a body of staff experts; it is an expansive force, a skeleton in peace but in war, ultimately, the armed nation. With these characteristics in mind, we can turn to the developments of the century that follows Waterloo and investigate the growth of national policies based largely on the new style conscript or national armies.

## CHAPTER IV

### NATIONAL MILITARY POLICIES

**A** GREAT idea underlies the national army when we compare it with the professional army of an earlier epoch. The monarch by divine right, proprietor of his kingdom and of his army, viewed the latter as a permanent force, normally ready, or almost ready, for war. Territorial acquisition was an ever-present aim, and inevitably necessitated violence. After the French Revolution, all this tends to change, although the agitations of the epoch obscure to some extent the underlying fact. Yet if armies are a citizen force, and if in time of peace they

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are maintained in skeleton outline only, then, normally, a clearly defined nation with self-government will view territorial acquisition as an unusual act, and war as exceptional. Unfortunately for Europe, its nationalities were not well defined in 1815; self-government is still far from wholly achieved; expansion—racial, economic, colonial—further complicate the situation.

When Napoleon fell, France in the West and Russia in the East were nearer to national self-realization than the great jumble of Teutonic, Slav, and Latin people that lay in between. The nationalistic revolutions of 1821, 1830, and 1848 showed what profound dissatisfaction existed; and the upshot came in the war of 1859, that created a united Italy, and the wars of 1866 and 1870 that created a larger Germany.

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We are not concerned here with tracing or analyzing these great convulsions, but merely in noting their influence on the more limited question before us.

With such conditions of national overcrowding and national aspiration as Europe presented, great military struggles were inevitable. The effects of these on armies and the policies behind them are important to trace, though these effects varied greatly in the different States. In Prussia-Germany an extreme was reached in one direction; in Switzerland in another; while in Belgium negative results only can be traced. An investigation of the national policies or attitudes developed in these three typical cases must serve to illustrate the wider question; while a few comparisons with conditions in

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the United States will serve to close the topic.

After her great effort in the War of Liberation, Prussia became somewhat negligent of her army, and met with a disagreeable surprise in consequence. She found herself powerless in the unexpected crisis of 1850, and had to accept humiliating terms imposed on her by Austria. She then started on an upward path and within a few years von Roon became Minister of War; von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff; and von Bismarck, Foreign Minister.

Von Roon demanded increased numbers. The Prussian assembly declined, almost unanimously, to vote the necessary sums of money. It reflected the normal new attitude, the natural reluctance of national representatives to increase an army and correspondingly



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to increase taxation beyond what obvious necessity appeared to demand. It was true that Prussia, owing to the weakness of her army, had been unable to realize certain ambitions, of the Hohenzollerns on the one hand, of the German people on the other. Yet Prussia's own existence and integrity were not directly menaced, and her army was in any case powerful enough to impose respect on a possible assailant. So why should not Prussia mind her own business, leave the army alone, and attend to economic and social questions? That is a fair description of the attitude of the Prussian assembly in its resistance to army increase.

Year after year von Roon urged his case, and failed. Finally Bismarck was brought in, the most forceful figure of Europe since Napoleon. To him it

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seemed that Prussia should struggle towards a goal, of which Pan-Germanism now appears the not-far-distant accomplishment. To attain his objects,—the creation of a greater and Prussianized Germany,—an army and a policy of expansion were necessary. And when he met the Budget Committee of the Landtag to discuss with them army appropriations and increase, he roundly declared to them, his fist on the table, that his policy was one of “blood and iron!”

Blood and Iron! All Germany shuddered at this cynical and brutal formula, though at the present time people are a little apt to forget this quite important fact. All Germany shuddered. Bismarck stood alone, with a few thin-lipped soldiers drawn up at attention behind him. And even

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among high-placed officials in Berlin it was whispered that he was demented, a lunatic who ought to be locked up. Unfortunately there was more in what he said than they could realize for the moment. The policy he intended to carry out by violence was irresistibly driven by deep acting waves flowing steadily towards that very shore on which Bismarck had set his over-eager eyes. And, to make things worse, the intellect of Europe happened at that time to be captivated by those theories of man struggling in nature which Darwin had made fashionable. In the struggle for the survival of the fittest were not blood and iron inevitable factors? German intellectualism pressed in where plain people would not have ventured. The historians of Prussia, their minds aglow with the exploits of

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Frederick and the men of 1813, were the first to accept the new formula. Von Sybel was already at Bismarck's beck and call. Von Treitschke, at first one of his most bitter critics, got so much light from the lifting of Schleswig-Holstein that he promptly found religion and discovered one hundred historical reasons why Schleswig-Holstein really belonged to Prussia! In reality there were not one hundred reasons but one only, which Treitschke forgot to mention:—Bismarck; or, if the reader prefers, blood and iron!

This rapid conversion of German intellectualism to the Bismarckian creed was one of the great facts lying behind the policies which the world sees in action as these lines are written. It will be necessary to consider some further aspects of German idealism in due

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course. But for the present, we may take a glance at the two great wars of the reformed Prussian army through which, while von Moltke was defeating the Austrian and French armies, Bismarck was creating the new Germany.

Very false impressions exist as to what the Prussian army accomplished in the campaigns of 1866 and of 1870. Victory over opponents who were badly led, and in some respects deficient, led to the creation of a legend immensely removed from the truth. To state the case within the present limits is evidently not possible; but some indication of the truth may be attempted, as it would appear to the student of military history. Our attention will be concentrated on the campaign of 1870-71.

The two armies opposed differed in several particulars. On the Prusso-

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German side the emphasis on numbers had produced an army numerically superior to the French, but inferior in the solidity of its infantry because the term of service was shorter. The first line of the French troops, as unit to unit, showed much greater cohesion than their opponents. Deployment for battle was better on defensive positions even though the tactical guidance for the offensive was less skilful, in fact hopelessly inferior. Each of the two armies was so large that its control proved a difficult problem. This was fairly well solved by the Germans—that is, they did employ a system of control and attained high strategic mobility; the French had no real staff guidance beyond the primitive expedient of a staff attached to the person of the commander in the field. This was

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selected from the Etat Major Général, a corps of special officers created shortly after the close of the Napoleonic wars.

The officers of the German General Staff were specially trained to keep moving smoothly the innumerable wheels of a large machine of men and transport unrolled over an immense stretch of country and attempting to reach and overpower an imperfectly located opponent. They had all been taught the same general principles; they applied similar solutions to similar problems; and roughly succeeded more or less well in keeping the armies in motion, getting them together on the field of battle, and feeding up the firing lines as rapidly and insistently as possible. None of these things could be done with the French army.

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Again, in the German army, a new and very powerful artillery was used with boldness and some tactical skill, while the French guns remained inferior at every point. The Germans produced in von Moltke a good leader, where the French showed mostly incapacity and lack of military education. In these things alone, differences were to be found sufficient to account for the disasters of the French army. Yet it does not follow from these things that the German army was anything like a perfect machine as it is so often represented to have been. That was, indeed, very far from being the case.

It was not unnatural that the overpowering successes of the German armies at Metz and Sedan should have created an impression of perfection and invincibility. Writers inexperienced in mil-



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itary matters trumpeted this opinion loudly. The newspaper man, now coming to his brief harvest in the field of war, made the matter even worse. Germany, intent on building up the prestige of the budding empire, gave official color to these ideas through the history of the war composed by the General Staff. But while the official panegyrists were cooking the accounts, a number of unofficial persons, Germans trained for war, observant and thoughtful, were beginning to put together in a purely detached and scientific spirit the ideas which they had garnered from the battlefield. Broadly speaking they were specially impressed with the weakness of infantry under modern conditions, the difficulty of maintaining tactical cohesion, the crudeness of the method of control evolved

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by the General Staff. These points, leaving some others on one side, deserve attention because of the important deduction to which they lead.

The problem in effect was this: With the intensity of fire attained by modern armaments (in 1870) the combat and the tactical formations have become correspondingly loose. How is one, with this looseness, to control scattered bodies of men, so as to maintain their cohesion, keep their direction, and force them up to the shock? And further, how can this be done in correct relation to other bodies to the right and left and at the opportune moment? The first was a tactical, the second a staff problem. The latter may be dismissed, for our purpose, as merely indicating the immense importance of a proper system of training for the staff

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and higher command of an army. But the tactical problem presents further points of interest.

It was quite evident to honest German investigators that under modern conditions of intensified fire, shorter training, and looser tactics, their infantry tended to dissolve into a mob. And mobs inevitably are less inclined to face trouble than to escape it. Evidently the greatest efforts must be made to obtain infantry leading highly trained in maintaining cohesion, continuous advance, proper direction, and the best tactical shock. But with whatever pains this difficult standard might be pursued, there would still be the flinching of the individual soldier to overcome, an almost insuperable difficulty as the experience of 1870 seemed to show. "The only things," wrote

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Hönig, "that can furnish a substitute for the lowered action of the leaders on the masses, are a more developed sentiment . . . and the national principle of honor. . . . If a national injury to honor, or to territory, and so forth, were felt in equal degree by each individual, . . . causing him to require satisfaction and to pledge from his innermost sentiments body and life for this, then Tactics would have an easy game to play. . . . Mahomet was the type of an army psychologist. . . . In war that which is highest must be sought in the soul . . . and the fighting method must correspond to it, must be national. . . . Nations which desire to gain something . . . will as a rule possess in their armies more operative imponderables [trans. freely: *rooted prejudices*] than others do . . . that

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merely desire to hold, that is to protect their property, their position among the nations.”<sup>1</sup>

This idea, that the nation must be fanaticized, for this is what it amounts to, was the cry of despair of the tactician at the ineffectiveness of modern infantry for getting a decision by shock. It was largely acted on in Germany during the period preceding the war of 1914, and reinforced the previous acceptance by the intellectuals of the Bismarckian doctrine of Blood and Iron. The nation was trained to think in artificial terms all tending to fanaticize the rank and file and thereby to increase efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hönig, "Tactics of the Future," 4th Edit. Part II. Sect. 1, 3 and 4.

<sup>2</sup> German militarist psychology is a large and difficult subject, that can obviously only be touched on here. The origin of it goes back to the Bismarckian policies; the impetus comes from the Franco-Ger-

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In the ultimate result—the German armed nation of 1914—we see the momentary combination of the citizen army with a positive military spirit akin to that of the earlier epoch of divine right monarchs and professional soldiers. It is true that expansion is more legitimate when, as now, it proceeds largely from economic and racial causes. Yet on the whole the combination just noted is unnatural and must be fleeting. At bottom an army made

man War; the extreme is found in the period immediately before the outbreak of the present war. The reader is advised to turn to the German War Ministry confidential circular of March, 1913, printed in the French Yellow Book of November, 1914, for an interesting light on the propagandism carried on in this last period. An extract follows:

“Our new army law is but an extension of the military education of the German people. Our ancestors of 1813 made greater sacrifices. It is our sacred duty to sharpen the sword which has been placed in our hand, and to hold it ready for our defense as well as to strike our enemy. The idea that our armaments are a reply to the armaments and policy of

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up not of professional soldiers but of ordinary citizens, framed so as to expand in time of war and to dwindle in time of peace, represents a negative and not a positive military policy. And the constantly decreasing power of such an army to force a decision through shock, tends in the same direction. Some of these considerations apply particularly to the case of Switzerland.

the French must be instilled into the people. The people must be accustomed to think that an offensive war on our part is a necessity if we are to combat the adversary's provocations. We must act with prudence in order to arouse no suspicion, and so as to avoid the crises which might damage our economic life. Things must be so managed that under the weighty impression of powerful armaments, of considerable sacrifices, and of political tension, the outbreak of war (*Losschlagen*) shall be considered as a deliverance, because after it would come decades of peace and of prosperity, such as those which followed 1870. The war must be prepared for from a financial point of view. There is much to be done in this direction. The distrust of our financiers must not be aroused, but nevertheless there are many things which it will be impossible to hide."

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This little republic, the center of Europe, has for some years possessed the perfect model of a national army. The policy of the nation was easy to frame in relation with its surroundings. North, south, east and west lay neighbors so powerful as to preclude any territorial ambition. On the other hand, these neighbors presented a threat along every mile of frontier. So the Swiss decided on a policy of national defense. And defense to be bearable, with a small people and relatively poor country, had to be inexpensive; while on the other hand to stand any chance of success it had to place large masses in the field.

To carry out this policy Switzerland gives preliminary military instruction in her schools, and at twenty years of age calls on every man, mentally,



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physically, and morally fit, to train for sixty days. . (Ninety days in the artillery and other special services.) Thereafter he trains eleven days a year until he reaches the age of thirty-two, when he is turned over to the reserve which holds him till he is forty-eight.

The framework for this militia army, armament, equipment, officers' corps, technical services, munitions of war, are maintained in a highly organized state so that mobilization of the Swiss army can be effected within a few days of the call to arms. On first assembling it is not to be supposed that the Swiss infantry would equal the quality of the German or French. But a very few weeks' experience in the field, added to their early training with the rifle, would probably turn these hardy and liberty-loving mountaineers, of

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splendid fighting qualities and tradition, into an army formidable enough under modern standards to put up a strong resistance in defensive positions.

The authorities give varying numbers for the Swiss army. Their first line is placed at from 150,000 to 250,000 men. The reserve may be reckoned at almost as many more. An army such as that, concentrated on a front near the line Bienne-Zurich would prove more than an embarrassment to any French or German army that should venture to cross lots through Bale and the northwestern corner of Switzerland. It is the virtual guarantee of the independence of a brave people, who have too much sense to put their faith in international guarantees of neutrality, and enough spirit to be willing to face the military issue

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instead of feebly evading it. With Belgium, we come to the opposite case.

Belgium had twice the population of Switzerland, almost one-eighth of the population of Germany, and a commerce that ranked higher than that of great powers like Italy, Austria-Hungary, or Russia. She had other advantages in the compactness of her population, her developed railroad system, her supplies of coal and iron, her open sea frontier. She possessed, in addition, a narrow front of some military value facing Germany, the line of the Meuse between Liége and Givet. In other words, her situation as compared with Switzerland was immensely more favorable for organizing a national defense. Even as compared with Germany single handed, with her population compactly placed, on a narrow

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front, and with great economic resources, it was not quite hopeless to attempt to resist her neighbor; the Swiss, we may guess, would certainly have made the attempt. But that was not the practical problem.

The practical problem was merely how to defend Belgian neutrality in case of war between other Powers. It was true that the neutrality of Belgium, like that of Switzerland, was under the guarantee of treaties. But the observance of such treaties was not in the traditions of European diplomacy. A great power dealing with a little one was far more likely to consult expediency than international ethics, as even the United States had recently shown in the case of Panama. Beyond all that was the definite knowledge, tabulated on the cards of every general staff

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of Europe, that the railroads recently developed by Germany towards the Belgian frontier were intended for the conveyance of troops, the designation and placing of which could almost wholly be worked out. German publicists and writers on military affairs did not hesitate to inform the world that to carry out against France the envelopment on a wide strategic front of the von Moltke-von der Goltz school a swinging movement through Belgium was necessary. It was also clear that the narrow frontier in Lorraine was wholly inadequate for deploying such masses as Germany possessed. The economic desirability of seizing the coal and iron resources of Belgium and northern France was probably not yet realized to be a fundamental necessity for Germany's strategic policy. But

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even if this last point was not generally grasped, it still remains true to say that no nation ever received more definite warning that her hour was at hand than Belgium.

How did she meet it? Her attitude was most characteristic, and had many points of resemblance with that of this country towards the military problem. She was engrossed in one of the most remarkable outbursts of industrial energy that the world has seen. Labor problems and social reforms had become urgent. She concentrated her attention on herself. Beyond her border there was nothing to interest her, for her ambitions did not lie that way. She was impatient, one is almost tempted to say naturally impatient, at any thought of spending money and foresight on anything so irreconcilable with her

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ideals as an army. And the upshot was a haphazard, neglectful, ineffective treatment of the problem. Then she woke up one fine morning to find her country wrecked and in ashes.

The Belgian army, costing rather more than half again as much as the Swiss, roughly thirteen millions of dollars to eight, was much less efficient. It stood on paper at about 48,000 men, though this number was not actually reached, and the efficiency of its infantry was ranked low. A few show regiments of the royal guard, and the scientific attainments of the technical corps were good; the rest almost negligible. There was a reserve of about the same numbers, and a *garde civique* of no military value. Had Belgium been equipped with a system half as effective as the Swiss, she could have matched

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man for man with Germany on the Liège-Givet line, and quicker, up to half a million of men or more. As it was her small forces proved useless—notwithstanding the exaggerated views so widely disseminated as to what took place at Liège and afterwards.

With every country of Europe we have to deal with a similar range of facts: national policy and the armed force. And in no two countries do we find the same policy or the same expression of it in terms of arms. Some nations are wise, others foolish; some are strong, others weak; some aggressive, some pacific; some wasteful, others provident. But summing up and looking to the future it may be said that unless European civilization is doomed to suffer some considerable setback, Switzerland has evolved the logical form of



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the national army, and placed as she is, she has been compelled to carry that form out to its largest numerical terms. Germany made of the national army first a weapon for achieving national unity, a comprehensible ambition, and later a weapon for the assertion of certain aims, largely the result of great economic expansion, that involved the coercion of her neighbors. But this, let us hope, is only a passing phase, and even the German national army may prove a stepping stone to more pacific times and methods.<sup>3</sup>

In the United States peculiar conditions vary the shape of the general argument. These conditions will be considered shortly. But before reaching

<sup>3</sup> As the present war continues so do its economic factors stand out more plainly. The situation may be worse than is here indicated, and we may stand at the beginning of vast struggles for economic control.

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them it may already be pointed out that a similar reluctance to face the military problem to that which was shown by Belgium is manifest in the United States. Fortunately the words *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, have not yet appeared on our walls, and the actual problem to be considered is far slighter than the one which has just concluded in the catastrophe of Belgium. Yet the United States has no more rational policy than Belgium had, and has never seriously asked the question: What are the possibilities that face us, and what are the reasonable precautions to take in view of such possibilities?

## CHAPTER V

### KRUPPISM AND DISARMAMENT

**A** WELL-KNOWN college president, an acknowledged authority on fishes, has lately taken a sudden plunge into history. The results of his investigations lead him to the conclusion that for a nation to arm itself is to choose the worse alternative between "Hell or Utopia."<sup>1</sup> This may represent sound reasoning in terms of ichthyological classifications, though it has a suspicious smack of the specialist in headlines; but to the professional historian, when applied to the policies of nations, it sounds decidedly fishy. Na-

<sup>1</sup> President Jordan, at a public dinner, New York, Dec. 2, 1914.

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tions that frame their policies on the "Hell or Utopia" alternative are more than likely to get into trouble—either way! The real interest lies in seeing a little more closely what are the fixed values behind certain ways of thought and action. Militarism and Pacifism may serve as convenient labels under which to group them. Let us consider them in their mutual reactions.

Militarism and pacifism; Kruppism and disarmament; Hell and Utopia; all these are words that represent something. Yet as they are most commonly used they are nothing more than formulas for airing prejudices and giving the go-by to close investigation and precise thinking. To demolish the extreme doctrines of either party is a comparatively easy task; what is less easy is to set down the pros and cons, with

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their significance, so as to arrive at something helpful.

It may be remarked then that militarism and pacifism are equally difficult of definition. A really advanced pacifist believes that it is wicked even to speak of arms; and he would consider a Swiss deputy advising the issue of a modern field gun as an enemy of mankind. We need not stop to argue the question with him. For an equally earnest but moderate pacifist might highly approve of the same Swiss deputy, on the ground that he was merely advocating a measure of necessity for maintaining the independence of his country. It is between these two points, which are so far apart, that pacifism oscillates. Between the two lies the pacifist predisposition.

Now the pacifist predisposition un-

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doubtedly proceeds from the advance of economic civilization. Man appreciates more and more the luxuries he creates, and therefore tends to reject more and more his primitive tendency towards war, with its attendant hardship and suffering.

Economic civilization is inevitably materialistic, that is, both grasping and hedonistic. Happiness of the individual, of the greatest number, of the whole community, becomes all absorbing.

Yet on the other hand economic ambitions are behind the greatest war in history; while often enough we may note that war is the greatest spur through which economic development has been reached. The most striking example of this fact dates back about three hundred years, and is worth attention if we are to see these

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facts in anything like their true proportions.

“If a date must be picked at which the current of international politics turned into the channel with which we are now familiar, the year 1600 will answer the purpose well enough. . . . Holland, at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, rapidly passed through phases that illuminate the whole current of events from that day to this. Let us glance at a few ancient facts and modern doctrines. One of the theories most ardently propagated by the million-dollar endowments is that war fatally saps the nation’s vitality because it destroys the most valuable part of its population. The fallacious assumptions contained in this doctrine are plentiful, but it will suffice for our purpose to attack it at one point only,

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and with Holland as the example. That country sustained one of the most desolating wars recorded in modern history, and a war that lasted, with scarcely an interruption, for no less than forty years (1568-1609). Towards the close of the conflict success, coupled with maritime preponderance, inclined to the Dutch arms. Hardly had it terminated when the Dutch people displayed such extraordinary energy as perhaps no European state has ever equaled. Almost immediately they captured the carrying trade of Europe and developed a commercial civilization that was the wonder and envy of all their neighbors. Three years before the truce of 1609 it was already reckoned that the Dutch had three ships to the English one, while half a century later Colbert stated that there were



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about twenty Dutch ships to every French one. Their cities throve as none other in Europe. Their art rivaled that of Italy, and Spain, and France. With Grotius, they founded systematic international law. With Spinoza, a little later, they founded the philosophy of materialism. And all this gigantic work was accomplished by a little nation the vitality of which, according to all the pseudo-historical theories of the sciolists of pacifism, should have been utterly destroyed by war.

“What, then, is the truth of the matter? It would appear to be this, that the energy generated by war, the confidence engendered by success, and the adaptability and resourcefulness taught by military enterprise, far offset any debit that may come from the loss of a

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percentage of the young male population. Successful war, even of such prolonged and devastating character as the Dutch war for independence, is the sure forerunner of a vigorous period of expansion. For modern instances of the rule we need seek no further than our own Northern States after the Civil War, or Germany after the war of 1870.”<sup>2</sup>

Whatever their dangers, materialism and pacifism find man in his most developed state. However much we may admire the primitive virtues of courage and generosity, however much we may despise greed and the fear of death or even pain, we are bound to take man's advance in terms of the intellect. It is by thinking and reasoning that we have

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, “Three Hundred Years of War.” *Infantry Journal*, November, 1914.

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advanced; and by thinking and reasoning we have reared a civilization that makes for happiness and abhors destruction and bloodshed. Our great problem is one of balance, of advancing wisely, without imprudence, lest we slip back into the primitive brute, or on the other hand lose our foothold in a too-eager search for happiness.

A moderate or temperate pacifism would thus appear to be the wise road for a nation to follow. Switzerland may be said to conform to this ideal. Spain, with her small army and navy, might be thought of in the same category were it not for her evident lack of vitality. France has been partly pacific, partly aggressive. The rebuilding of her army after the disaster of 1870-71 was a reasonable act of prudence, and for the most part her atti-

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tude towards her continental neighbors has been all that it should be. Yet her African policy has been one of conquest, and at times, under some provocation, she has assumed an aggressive attitude as to Alsace-Lorraine. England, long an active military power in terms of colonial empire, closed an epoch with the end of the nineteenth century. She no longer aims at conquest. And the withdrawal of her ships of the line from the Pacific marked her abandonment of world-wide maritime supremacy. Within her own waters, and along the shores that face her she still pursues, perhaps inevitably, a policy of naval supremacy. This policy reposes on the fast increasing vulnerability of her sea-borne commerce and food supply.

There are two topics of special inter-

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est constantly brought forward in pacifist debates: disarmament and the "international mind." Each is worth some discussion. The first is essentially a practical question; the second, an intellectual one.

Disarmament is essentially a practical question. We may accept as a basis of argument that it is wholly desirable that the great Powers should agree to a permanent peace. On this basis what are the difficulties of the question, its probabilities, our possible means of action? There can be no doubt, when we view the condition of the great European powers and Japan, and when we consider the reaction of public sentiment that will occur at the close of the present war, that disarmament is urgent. Are the difficulties in its way superable?

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One of the gravest obstacles lies in the fact that no two nations are situated in the same way. Will Germany disarm? This means the surrender of her ambitions to expand over the less well occupied regions of the world. It means the arousing of a fear that the hostile or alien elements within the empire, the Danes, the Poles, the people of Alsace-Lorraine, even the Bavarians or Saxons, might then attempt to assert local sovereignty. It means fear that the superior numbers of Russia, which could not be wholly disarmed, might prevail against her.

It has just been said that Russia could not wholly disarm. Her Cossacks are the finest raw cavalry in the world, though almost useless in organized armies for lack of training. But if organized armies were suppressed they

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might then easily prove the decisive force.

For even if these primitive tribesmen could be made to surrender carbine and sword and ammunition, even if the manufacture of arms were declared illegal, it is obviously they who could most rapidly beat out from the plowshare the spear head or the sword; and the days of Attila might be on us again.

In the case of England the difficulty is even greater. The English army has long been maintained for colonial and not for European purposes. Would she be required to put it down on a European disarmament; or might she retain it? To put it down would open the Khyber pass and create a new Mogul empire. Will Afghanistan be required to disarm, and will Arabia,

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and, if so, who will enforce the decree, and how?

The practical difficulties grow the more we study the details. And we need not even state the further complications that the parallel question of naval disarmament introduces. With that also no two countries, no two geographical areas, present the same conditions. England is situated thus and Austria so. The North Sea may favor a flotilla defensive, the Atlantic a super-dreadnought offensive, and so on indefinitely. Yet there are broad lines that may be stated tentatively, even if they lead to somewhat negative conclusions.

As a general proposition it is clear that with the western European nations the development of national armies coincides closely with that of economic



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resources. Warfare has become so extensive in scope and in technical complication as to have become an intolerable burden on the comparatively small areas that support it in this extreme form. The question of the size of nations will be noticed in the next chapter; for the present it is sufficient to observe that the further east one proceeds the less is the burden felt, so that the disarmament of the western nations could only result in the rise of the Powers lying east of them.

It would seem therefore that all that is practical, all that is desirable, is the carrying forward of the tendency to disarm, without expecting too much or pressing forward too ardently. Militia armies of the Swiss type are clearly possibilities for England or France within the next few years. Such

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armies would be too weak for offense to be a real menace to peace, but, if efficient, strong enough for defense, for safeguarding independence and interests.

Swiss model armies, however, even though they are a probable phase of the near future for western Europe, could not satisfy the conditions of an international police for the maintenance of world peace. Such a police force would mean of necessity small and scattered numbers, but high efficiency; in other words, the professional army over again, though on a new basis. It is difficult to believe at the present time that we are within sight of a moment when the European powers could effect the tremendous and dangerous change from the basis of numbers to that of quality; yet below the surface causes are work-

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ing in that direction that are quite likely to show up before many more years have passed.

Professional armies would afford the best basis for a world police, if for no better reason than that international coöperation would become more necessary between Powers each of which had only a small army. A professional force, small but adequate in size, is further a more valuable element of stability within a State than a national army watered down to the Swiss militia standard. For every country, particularly with the growth of industrialism and cities, has to face recurrent periods of disorder in which the local police forces may prove inadequate and require stiffening. In the history of the United States, presently to be dealt with, there is one extraordinary illustra-

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tion of the far-reaching results that depend on just such an adjustment. Again, turning to the problem presented by the eastern people lying roughly in the great triangle Belgrade, Kabul, Magdala, it is clear that small highly efficient forces can accomplish more in the way of pacification than national militias.

Another general idea that we hear much debated is that of the international mind. It is evident that we have here a question that does not bear in any immediate sense on the question of armament. If internationalism is an inevitable tendency, it clearly favors disarmament in the long run. The superficial adjustments of human life, and the standardization of materialistic happiness, make for some such unification as is here in question. It is conceivable

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that in due process of years the Chinaman, Zulu, and North American will set approximately equal values on plumbing and moving pictures, on wireless telephones and inexpensive shock absorbers. But even if they should, could that negative racial antagonism? You may get the whole world thinking alike on ninety-nine per cent. of the questions which the ordinary citizen ever does think about. But the one per cent. left unaccounted for may possibly wreck the whole edifice founded on the rest.

A few will go even further than mere scepticism as to the utility of the "international mind." Unification or simplification is a pseudo-philosophical concept based on a misunderstanding of the laws of race and the laws of intellect. Advance goes with complexity and

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the greater opportunity for selection. Commercial intercourse may require a simplification of language, but intellectual progress demands more and greater complication. The substitution of a single language for the variety of tongues now possessed by man, would within the space of a generation prove a disaster for the power of expression and the power of thought of the race.

Turning from these remote possibilities, we shall find something more tangible in the state of affairs we may designate as Kruppism. One of the least edifying features of the competition for armaments has been the growth of huge industrial enterprises earning millions out of the development of engines for taking human life. To this must be added the employment of

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methods, often savoring of corruption, for obtaining favorable contracts. It should be said, however, that such methods are not peculiar to firms engaged in such industries. It might be possible to get an international agreement prohibiting the manufacture of arms and war material by private firms, together with commerce in such articles from one country to another. Even Russia might be persuaded into such an agreement; and it would amount to a step in restraint of war. On the other hand, it will doubtless be argued that private competition stimulates invention and improvement.

To close the chapter, we might glance at another formula of the extreme pacifists. It may fairly be stated as follows: That armaments create war and that any risk is wiser than to in-

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crease armaments. This formula is compounded in about equal parts of truth and untruth. It is true that the race of armaments may under favoring circumstances bring about the very result which its advocates claim to prevent. Without any doubt the great war of 1914 was in part caused by the mere existence of an immense war machine. That machine had long been the dominant force of European politics, it had long been perfected and strengthened into one of the wonders of Western civilization. But no one had seen it at work, though all that was needed to set it going was the pressing of a button. Inevitably that button had to be pressed some day.

Few would care to deny this, yet it does not justify the conclusion of the pacifist formula. That thing has hap-



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pened with a given country under given conditions. We may even push further and say: the thing tends to result from increasing armaments. But is that tendency of necessity a strong one? Is it not, on the contrary, in nearly every case we know, a slight one? And is not, in reality, the practical problem, one of balancing the pros and the cons? Let us glance at the present cases of France, England, and the United States.

France has been one of the great competitors in the struggle of armaments. Within recent years there was a moment, after the introduction of the 75 millimeter quick-firing gun, when she led handsomely in the race. Yet this did not result in any appreciable departure from the restrained attitude towards her continental neighbors that she

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had till then maintained. The English fleet, with some ups and downs in efficiency, has generally held a commanding superiority during the same period. And there is practically nothing we may rightly call aggression in England's attitude, save in what relates to her determination to fight rather than permit Germany to establish a naval base in the middle Atlantic. This determination was not directly the outcome of naval superiority, but of a different set of reasons.

The case of the United States within the sphere of American politics is very similar. Following the Spanish war we began to expand our navy until in a few years, almost suddenly, it became one of the great navies of the world. Within the political theater of the West Indies and South America it was far

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more preponderant than the German war machine was in Europe. Did we become militarists in consequence? Have we abused our force in Mexico? Is there any unwise and inflammable tendency among our people so to abuse it? Those who argue that an increase in the size of the American army would turn the American people into militarists, pay a pretty poor compliment to the common sense and the rooted good qualities of our people.

These questions of militarism or pacifism; of Kruppism or disarmament; of Hell or Utopia, are of vast interest and importance. They are infinitely arguable. But the man who will serve his country best will have the patience to study each particular problem as a definite case and the more he studies such problems the less he will be likely

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to solve them with a long word, he more he will be likely to find himself forced in the direction of practical, makeshift measures, which no eloquent formulas are likely to fit, but that may yet be of infinite value to his country.

## CHAPTER VI

### EUROPE—ASIA—AMERICA

**A**ND now, the map. One of the greatest facts behind the conflict now proceeding, is the world's shrinkage. Communication, the interrelation of nations, the circulation of the human corpuscles within the world's body, are all immensely increased, intensified. And the great war in Europe is, among other things a result of overcrowding, of friction, a struggle for size.

Had the Germans reached Paris, and the French continued to fight from behind the Loire, nobody could have missed the point. France with some forty millions of people is oppressed by

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the weight of Germany, which has about sixty-five millions. To these sixty-five millions add the Germans within the Austrian Empire together with the Slav populations over which the Germans are extending political and economic suzerainty, and the weight becomes well-nigh overpowering.

But the Germans themselves are in turn overweighted. Beyond them lie one hundred and sixty millions of Russians, and a sparsely populated country of almost boundless agricultural and industrial possibilities. Just as the French feel the weight of the Germans, so do the Germans feel the weight of the Russians. And these relations of weight and bulk, so to speak, are becoming every day more appreciable owing to increasing facility of communication.

Turn the question another way about.

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Until half a century ago Europe remains large enough for practical purposes. Then comes the consolidation of the Italian people, who are followed by the Germans, and at the same moment occurs a great extension, through railroad construction, of means for circulating. Before then the mountainous regions of central Europe, with no large national grouping, together with imperfect and difficult roads, had held Europe sufficiently dispersed. Economic development, and more pacific conditions have rapidly brought fast growing nations closer together. And in most of western Europe the population by the beginning of the twentieth century was outrunning its agricultural resources. Food supply was ceasing to be local and becoming international. A few great areas of wheat were emerg-

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ing as the central food supply of many nations.

In a way, Europe itself was outgrown. Draw a line from Königsberg on the Baltic to Odessa on the Black Sea. West of that lies a stretch of country, highly favored by climate and water communication. But it is now rapidly feeling its relatively small size. It would hold comfortably between Key West and Chicago, the Aroostook and Mobile. Yet within it are crammed half a dozen civilizations, a dozen languages, and well-nigh twenty armies, three quarters of which are in a high state of efficiency. The hostile lines of competing tariff systems are just as numerous; while a multiplicity of traditions, in which war and religion play a great part, are hopelessly rooted in a past that is not altogether edifying.



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Imagine all this in between Chicago and New York, and how unhappy we should be!

Partly as a result of this, Europe is now pouring a population in ever-increasing numbers across the Atlantic which is eager for more space and opportunity. Even the governments feel the pinch. France creates an African empire. England develops great colonial areas. Italy attempts to flow back around the eastern Mediterranean as Rome did before her. Little Belgium tucks central Africa into a pocket of which the lining has now been destroyed. Germany alone failed, or at most picked up a few leavings when it was too late. But all this merely eased what is at bottom a hopeless situation. For Europe cannot stand the pressure of expansion much longer if it continues on the

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same lines as during the last fifty years.

In any case, Russia overbalances Europe. The Germans are largely justified in their fear of Russia. Not justified in terms of civilization perhaps, for there is as yet no ground for supposing that Russia is incapable of equaling such cultural developments as those Germany incessantly advertises; but justified in terms of size, in terms of self-assertion, of independence. Take the mere matter of bulk. From the Prusso-Russian frontier near Warsaw, it is just over a thousand miles to the extreme western point of France, but eastward to Vladivostock on the Pacific is four or five times that distance, and all under the Tzar's flag.

Clearly the bulk of Russia, now that railroads are so rapidly killing distance, overtopples that of western Europe.

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A grown-up Russia, half Europe and half Asia, will make the terms Europe and Asia obsolete. And in the war now being waged the Slavs are only just beginning to display the huge military power which the future holds in store for them. While France and Switzerland and Germany can place in the field perhaps one male in every five, Russia is as yet too poor and too uneducated to place even as many as one in twenty.<sup>1</sup> France is at the end of her tether in terms of conscript armies; Germany cannot make very large gains; but Russia is only just beginning. A success in the present war may merely whet her appetite; a failure will leave her more determined than in the past to develop her resources further.

<sup>1</sup> On paper Russia disposes of from four to eight millions of soldiers. But her past record in such matters leaves one rather skeptical.

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Incidentally to these struggles the question of customs unions arises. In an attempt to gain size, in the case of nations, we may expect after the war to see efforts made at larger customs zones in Europe. Prussia has already tested the efficacy of such means for political enlargement. And it may also be pointed out that no adjustment is more conducive to peace than a destruction of the customs barriers between countries. If a few of our extreme pacifists would go out of oratory and go into negotiations for demolishing tariff walls, they would accomplish a great deal more than they do for the peace of the world.

The old distinction between Europe and Asia is fast becoming less clear. In the North, Russia nearly spans the two continents. In the South, the transitions from Vienna through Con-

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stantinople to Delhi, and thence to Tokio, are not to be thought of merely in terms European or Asiatic. Economic resources and organization, military power, are in many ways more important touchstones.

In undeveloped economic resources, in martial spirit, in religious zeal and cohesiveness, the Mohammedan world presents a problem for the near future. If the Khalifate of the Ottoman Turks at Constantinople is now doomed, as many believe, a new Khalifate will inevitably come into existence. The question is where? And the most probable points are Mecca, Bagdad, Cairo, or Kabul. No one can as yet prophesy the course of events within the Mohammedan world; at the most a few factors and tendencies may be pieced together, for what they are worth.

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First, then, is the fact already pointed out, that a new Khalifate will probably soon arise. To this we may add that the same tendency as in Europe towards shrinkage is proceeding in Asia and Africa, though at a slower pace. Yet Pan-Mohammedanism, which is partly a product of this shrinkage, is distinctly in sight; and a new Khalifate will almost inevitably tend towards a greater empire that might eventually stretch from the heart of Africa to the heart of Asia. Even if this consummation lies beyond the view of our own generation, a nearer step may not be so very long deferred. The Afghan princes may quite conceivably regain their lost foothold in India and plant the crescent once more on the towers of Delhi.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I omit a discussion of the Senoussi movement, as not really material to the general argument.

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Should Mohammedanism in any form create a new empire in southwestern Asia, then once more let us turn to the map. Asia would then have most of her immense territory divided into three great masses: Russia, China, and the Mohammedan lands, with the southeast parcelled out on a smaller scale. And each of those three great divisions would in turn contain easily, almost twice over, all the European States lying west of Russia. In terms of bulk, in terms of modern methods of communication, Europe compared to Asia would be very much as Belgium was to Germany before recent events. And let us add that seventy-five years ago communication was much more difficult in Europe than it has now become in Asia.

But neither India nor Japan has yet

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been mentioned. It is difficult to believe that a people so intelligent and so proud as the Japanese have not estimated a tendency from which they are almost certain to suffer eventually. At the present day they have attained a momentary supremacy in Asia. They have imposed their will on China and Russia. Their alliance with England when first entered into was one whereby the dominant Pacific power gave them an aid which was indispensable. But the present crisis has reversed the rôles of the two allies. Great Britain first drew her fleet in to the North Sea, and has now drawn her army towards the same point, so that in fact she is leaning on her alliance with Japan for securing the stability of Asia. For ten years Japan leaned on the support of England; now it is England leans on the



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support of Japan; that is a considerable fact in the history of Asia.

Undoubtedly the Japanese realize all this, and perceive the precariousness of England's Asiatic prestige and position. Yet the precariousness of their own position is just as evident, because the future belongs to the great countries and they are small.

The question is, will they attempt to seize a favorable moment and to gain expansion while there is yet time? Their policy, past, and present, points on the whole to this conclusion. Their successful wars of the last twenty years have been followed by enormous annexations of territory, and an even greater spread of economic suzerainty.

And now, though heavily burdened financially, and free from any military

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menace, they have decided on large increases for their army and navy.

Japan's policy, if, as seems probable, it is to take an aggressive form, may lie along one of several lines. China for the moment holds together in the hands of a strong and politic military dictator. But is it worth more than his life? Is not rupture in sight? And may not Japan eventually succeed in creating a great continental empire from the fragments? If this is not her ambition, or if she finds her way barred, then she may turn to the Pacific, and in the Pacific, it is the colonies of European powers, and our two great possessions, the Philippines and Alaska, that might prove the most tempting baits.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Every incident since these lines were written before the fall of Tsing Tau confirms the impression.

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For the moment, however, it would seem as though the Japanese statesmen were wisely bent on avoiding quarrels with Europe and America, while concentrating their efforts on the political and economic penetration of China. This course may be less dangerous to us than the other; but the values involved are very shifting; the great events proceeding in Europe may affect the world situation profoundly; and in a general sense it is true to say that Japan feels the spur of the situation and is likely to respond in ways that in any case must constitute a danger.

The question of the Pacific cannot be approached merely from its Asiatic side; there is also an American one. And to understand that we must glance Japan has clearly made up her mind that now, if ever, is her opportunity of absorbing Northern China.

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back at the course of our history. Our early statesmen, George Washington and Monroe among them, wisely believed that our remoteness from Europe was our greatest blessing, and that we should utilize it by keeping out of all possible entanglements. It might even be better on occasion not to trade with Europe at all than to run the risk of complications. As to diplomatic intercourse, the less the better; and that carried on by plain citizens; men of business or of law. That position was entirely comprehensible, let us say wise.

It was wise, in view of our size at that epoch, of our relations with the outside world, and of the state of communications. But from that epoch to the present, in a hundred years or so, a tremendous transformation has proceeded. Our people have slowly filled up our

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boundaries, and in places have already begun to migrate beyond. Communication has been phenomenally increased and cheapened. Our relations with the outside world have grown by leaps and bounds. Would Washington, at the present day, lay down for us the same policy as he did a century ago? It is not conceivable.

Already, by 1823, the situation had changed. Our power had increased, our outlook widened; and we stated to France and Russia, and other Powers, who were glancing across the Atlantic at South America, that we were more interested in that part of the world than they, and that we desired them to abstain from interference there.

Then came the steamboat, and the Atlantic and all the other seas began to dwindle. And after the steamboat

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came the telegraph, and a message flashed from America to Europe in seconds instead of weeks or months. In 1861 came a great military and naval expedition of France against Mexico; but it so happened that the United States was able to place half a million trained soldiers in the field at that epoch, and eventually compelled France to withdraw.

Since then the processes of expansion and interpenetration have proceeded with ever-increasing velocity. At the present day a population about equal to that of France and Germany occupies in the United States a territory that could hold those two countries six times over. Within the last few years we have come into close contact with the Spanish-American people lying to the south of us. We have fought

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Spain, and taken from her Cuba and the Philippines; we have dug a canal through Spanish-American territory; we have imposed a protectorate on some part of Central America; and finally we have intervened, though with uncertain policies, in the internal affairs of Mexico. These are all symptoms of a tendency of which the foundations are to be found in the racial and economic expansion that we are now going through. And it is safe to predict that this expansion still has before it a lengthy future.

The effect of these events on the United States in terms military presents features of resemblance with what may be seen in Germany. In the latter country a tremendous outburst of economic energy was coupled with a large increase of industrialism and city

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population. Food production rapidly fell towards the danger point. A badly conducted diplomatic policy tended to encircle Germany with enemies and threaten her supplies; while on the other hand colonial ambition was aroused. And a powerful navy was the inevitable result.

In the United States the reasons through which a great fleet came into existence were similar but not the same. The Spanish war revealed the inadequacy of our armaments;—no American citizen can afford to leave unread Admiral Chadwyck's admirable account of how some of our supposed men-of-war had to be towed around the Caribbean Sea! This revelation, together with the increasing demand for the application of moral pressure at Spanish-American ports, indicated the need for



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an adequate navy. The pressure of our capital, of our exports, of our mining and engineering experts; the digging of Panama; the consciousness of future developments of ever-increasing magnitude in the same direction; all made for the creation of the present American navy.

But the expansion of the United States can only be seen in its true proportions as a phase of the expansion of England. And England, in the form of Canada, lies to the north of us, our neighbor on the American continent. Canada and the United States together are roughly of the same size as all Europe including European Russia; or of the Russian Empire; or of China; or of the federation which may be created some day in South America. The climatic, agricultural, and economic

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conditions of the two countries are similar. Political and social ideas are tending in the same general direction. A common language creates a strong bond, increased by a similar tendency towards pacific and industrial aims. The most serious international problems, those that come from over the Atlantic and over the Pacific, are the same for both countries. To the thinking American, Canada is virtually with us, save for an uncomfortable line of customs that checks a closer intercourse between two kindred communities.

Canada and the United States are face to face with the same troublesome and dangerous question, that of Asiatic immigration. It fortunately does not belong to the present discussion, and we need only note its danger and difficulty, with one point more. With the same

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problem to face, Canada and the United States inevitably tend to act together. It is probable that behind the scenes British diplomacy, with the advantage of the Japanese alliance, has already attempted to find a solution by pacific means. If such means should fail ultimately, then it is our fleet coming through Panama into the Pacific that must protect not only the coast of California but, should the occasion arise, that of British Columbia as well.

It is through coöperation between Canada and the United States, it is at the point where the English speaking people bulk largest in numbers and space, that a greater association can be formed. For a good many years past Great Britain has attempted to find a formula for Imperial Federation. She has failed. And her failure is due to

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two things. One is, that it is not possible to build a tariff wall within which she and her widespread colonies can enter on equal terms. The other reason is that, however great her wealth and power, she is too small and lies in a geographical spot that is bad as the expansion of the world proceeds to-day.

“The world cares far less than it did twenty-five or even ten years ago about what the terms empire, monarchy, republic, federation, may be held to imply; but it cares more than ever it did about the economic conditions affecting the ordinary citizen under whatever form of government he may be living. . . . It is along some such lines as these that the advent of the American fleet into the Pacific should bring us closer to the other English-speaking states, and lay the foundations of a new and greater

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empire. We surely have outgrown any jealousy, any dislike, with which we formerly looked on the British flag. We surely have become too great to continue the country attorney policies that have too often done duty for statesmanship in the conduct of our foreign affairs. We surely can see the advantage, and the honor, of advancing on a broadened path of nationalism toward a future in which we should form the solid and splendid base of a group of mutually supporting Commonwealths. With its center and bulk of population stretching from Key West to Vancouver, one of its members wide across the Atlantic, another wide across the Pacific, the English-speaking world would take a new shape, and the British Empire would make way for something far stronger, in which not only Great Brit-

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ain and the United States would find an equal place, but also the four growing young sisters, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa. To understand and to wish a thing is half way to having it. If in the momentous developments of the next few years, in which the Canal and Asia must play a larger part, we fix our minds on the possibilities here indicated, not in any petty spirit of aggrandizement, but in that broader and humane spirit that has marked so much of our Mother Country's accomplished work, who knows but that we in turn may carry that work on to even greater ends? All that we need is to rise to a larger view of our responsibilities." <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> R. M. Johnston, "The Imperial Future of the United States." *Infantry Journal*, November, 1913.

## CHAPTER VII

### MILITARY EXPERIENCES OF THE UNITED STATES

**M**ILITARY history is much obscured by the survivor, the historian and the journalist. They are virtually banded in an unholy alliance to tell us everything except what we really ought to know. And even in what they do tell us, accuracy is more completely sacrificed than in almost any branch of mental activity. This proceeds inevitably from the very nature of war.

The soldier knows too little, and the general often enough too much, about the facts. The battle is mostly smoke,

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confusion, and excitement, in which little is seen and all is distorted. The weary survivor, unless the event is of a very unusual or striking description, begins to get his impressions at night, sitting around the camp-fire, from comrades about as well informed as himself. But some men are natural talkers, some have imagination. And these blaze out a path, uncertainly compounded of fact and fiction, along which the rest follow. In due course the camp-fire legends become crystallized. And by the time the old soldier is fighting the old battles over for his grandchildren, the residuum of fact is usually very elusive indeed.

The general sees better and knows more; yet he may be even more unreliable as a witness. For he has responsibilities and may be implicated. Military operations are in their nature full



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of unforeseen incidents, marked by a continuous series of errors based on misinformation, or miscalculation, or the failure of subordinates. The general leaves these for the most part out of his account, puts a good face on what is usually a pretty bad matter, and makes things come out as near as possible to some stock pattern of what really ought to have happened—but didn't!

The newspaperman, the historian, occasionally help a little, but not very much. They are better situated for giving a fair account, even if not eye witnesses, than the combatants themselves. But they have graven images of their own. They are looking for a drama, for deeds of heroism, for satisfactions of national prejudices, and all things that will enable them to mobilize

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their eloquence. What they will not do is to dig down into those hidden springs from which proceed the success or the failure of armies:—their organization; their armament; their tactics; their supply system; the training of their regimental officers, of their staff, of their higher command; their system of command; and the national policy of which these things are just so many expressions. Such matters do not make headlines or motion pictures; they require knowledge, application, and study; and consequently they are labeled militarism, and scrapped!

So what with the great difficulty of dealing with the evidence, and with the wrong proclivities of those who set it before the public, it is not difficult for a whole nation to grow up in a state of complete misconception as to its own

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military history. The people of the United States are precisely in that situation. To remedy it we require the complete rewriting of our military history—a formidable task. Here, there is nothing to be done save to pick out a few salient facts and to indicate their bearings.

Our worst tradition was early established, that of ill-considered, wasteful and ineffective half measures. It is reckoned that during the War of Independence there were 395,000 enrolments for service, many of them of course of the same man presenting himself again. Yet Washington was never able to place 20,000 men in line, and was generally so hopelessly inferior that he could not venture on decisive operations. His most brilliant achievements were accomplished at the head of

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2,500 men. Under this system it cost \$170,000,000 to carry the war through, to say nothing of the pensions paid to over 95,000 persons, some of which, widows of survivors, were still living and drawing their pay, a century later.

The source of the mischief lay in the fact that the control of the whole matter was with the Continental Congress, and that this body was jealous of a standing army, had no knowledge of military questions, and was inclined for cheese-paring. This was perhaps inevitable, but it was costly, in lives, time, and money. Congress chose to believe, for no reasons that will bear examination, that the struggle would be short, and decided to enlist men for twelve months, which, quite apart from anything else, was not nearly long enough to give them a discipline and solidity approach-

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ing that of the King's soldiers. Washington continuously protested, but in vain. He was always told that if these enlisted regulars were insufficient there was always the militia to fall back upon!

It is hardly too much to say that Lexington and Bunker Hill, or rather the false presentation of those events, were among the worst misfortunes that ever overtook this country. The legend of the minute man, of the patriot rising in his wrath, reaching for his old gun from over the ancestral mantel, driving the mercenaries of George III before him, has done and still does an incalculable amount of mischief. Of course the farmer was patriotic, could on occasion shoot a redcoat or even give his life for the cause. But to suppose that the farmer, collectively as militia, could face British infantry in the field under

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any circumstances save those of surprise or irregular fighting is absurd. Even the French infantry could hardly do that, as Dettingen, and Fontenoy and the Plains of Abraham had demonstrated. The militia might help with numbers in such a blockade as that of Boston, or hold a breastwork against a frontal attack. Beyond that it was a nuisance. Washington himself declared that the militia was worse than useless and had been the origin of all our misfortunes. And he was surely a competent witness.

After the War of Independence false economy continued to rule, with the same jealousy of a regular army and the same aberration as to the value of militia. At the time when Bonaparte became First Consul an era of expansion to the West opened, while Europe

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and the Atlantic witnessed gigantic struggles in which our trade interests were seriously threatened. We slowly drifted into war with Great Britain, relying meanwhile on the minute man chimera to meet the emergency when it should burst on us. Our army consisted of 6,700 men.

Congress once more attacked the situation by raising twelve months' troops, who were to be supported by a suitable background of militia. In all over 527,000 enrolments occurred, a greater number than that of the huge army with which Napoleon was then struggling to reach Moscow. Of these, 50,000 were regulars. The reader may be spared the pitiful, almost incredible, details of the administrative mismanagement into which Congress plunged these forces. It need only be said that Great Britain

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held her own along the Canadian border with 4,000 regulars, gradually increasing to 16,000, with some militia backing. Some of our performances on the frontier cannot be read without a blush. A small force of English dispersed our militia near Washington and raided the national capital with complete impunity. The cost of our military effort, one of the most disgracefully ineffective recorded in history, came to nearly 250 millions of dollars.

The close of the war was marked by two redeeming incidents. One was the disastrous failure of an English force to carry Jackson's breastworks at New Orleans by frontal attack. The other was the discovery of that brilliant soldier Winfield Scott, who did something towards making our troops in the North efficient.



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For a few years after these illuminating events Congress maintained the army on a slightly higher level. In 1821, however, the old tendency asserted itself, and the army was reduced to 6,000 men, and in another ten years we were paying the price. Indian troubles broke out in the Northwest and in Florida. We had no troops available, and for lack of a very few battalions of regulars we had to call out over 50,000 militia, to spend thirty millions and to face seven years of war and disorder in the Southeast.

In 1846 came the Mexican War, marked by the same deplorable features as our previous enterprises, but in part redeemed by the brilliancy of our officers and the high tactical quality of our scanty battalions of regulars. But it was not until the great Civil War

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that the United States attacked a military problem on anything like a large scale, and it is at that point that it is best to investigate and to draw lessons.

The Civil War was quite unnecessary and preventable. The slavery question had to be solved. England had solved it as an economic proposition. Opinion in the United States, though inflamed on the surface, was visibly tending towards such a solution. But unfortunately every hothead in the country knew that there was no power in our institutions to enforce law and order. Our army numbered less than 17,000 men, widely dispersed, and with as much on its hands as it could possibly attend to. There was no force disposable to control a district that should be inclined to break away from central control.

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It was not necessary that the United States should be a militarist country. We did not need a million or two of soldiers, nor half a million, nor even a hundred thousand. If we had had just sixty thousand troops at that time, it is safe to say that no civil war could have taken place. With sixty thousand men, however widely dispersed, we could presumably have collected two or three brigades with which to occupy Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans when symptoms of rebellion appeared and long before a local militia could be even assembled by the secession leaders. The fact that the Government could police the country would have been so obvious that the Southern leaders would probably never have considered secession, and that if they had the Southern officers would not have deserted their

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country for their state. Even had they done so, it would not have changed the situation. The rank and file, in 1861, stuck to their colors, and the only difficulty would have been to replace 40 per cent. of the officers, or to get along short-handed, a minor problem.

In connection with the Civil War we find the same conspicuous incapacity to handle a military question that our elected bodies have shown so consistently and so disastrously in terms of human life and treasure. The grotesque and outrageous notion was put forward, though the military advisers of the Administration offered perfectly sound advice, that 75,000 volunteers enrolled for three months could do the business. It was a policy so ignorant, so inept, that sent so many untrained citizens to an unnecessary

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death, that it almost deserves to be called criminal. A few weeks sufficed to demonstrate the futility of that measure, but the whole terrible length of the war was not enough to remedy another fundamental misconception that perhaps cost the country even more in terms of time, blood, and money. Regiments were organized as units, with no system of depots for training recruits and drafting them into the battalion at the front. All the experience of every country for a hundred years past overwhelmingly demonstrates that behind the trained unit at the front there must be the mechanism for keeping its ranks full. Instead of conforming to this standard we preferred, save for the notable exception of the State of Wisconsin, to let seasoned units gradually get weaker and weaker, and to send our

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raw recruits to the fray, with raw officers in raw regiments.

There were reasons, unfortunately, for all these things—political reasons. And that is one more illustration of the evil of leaving military policy to the exclusive control of Congress. The fact is that no subject is more difficult in its range of historical, psychological, and technical factors, than the military art; yet by one of those strange hallucinations to which man is subject, there is none on which the layman feels so competent to pass an opinion. And the less he knows about it, the more drastic his opinion. It is only when he begins to dig in to the theoretical and practical difficulties that surround the soldier that his views become more tentative.

Until we have persuaded Congress

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of this fact, until it has become willing to delegate some authority to boards of experts, as it might in questions of engineering, sanitation, forestry and so on, there is little hope of wiser views prevailing. But this is a digression, and we must return to the Civil War.

Men fought bravely in the Civil War, and even skilfully when on the defensive. But on the tactical offensive there was little skill, save here and there in the final phases. Every army attacking in line tended to lose cohesion and resolve itself into a mob the instant it was called on to advance under fire. The Second Manassas offers what may be described as a fair average sample of this tendency, inevitable from the lack of training of the men, the company commanders, the regimental of-

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ficers, the staff and the higher command, in their respective duties.

At the Second Manassas we have on the part of Lee brilliant strategy; on the part of Lee's troops, really fine marching. Then came the tactical shock. On the second day of the battle, after Pope had worn his army out, the Confederates advanced to force the decision. Longstreet's corps deployed on a front of about two miles, moved forward about a mile to a mile and a half, sweeping back such Federal forces as were in its front. But at the end of that advance, it had become a confused mass of troops, in which brigade and divisional organizations had been lost, and in many cases even regimental ones. On the sky line, as the troops moved to the attack, was a solitary house, and it acted as an irresistible magnet on the



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whole line. At that house one can trace the presence of men from almost every single unit of Longstreet's corps, except the reserve division (Anderson's). In other words, as the result of a carefully planned attack, with troops in a state of high morale, all tactical cohesion was lost in an advance of a little more than a mile, and there was left something little better than a helpless mob.

This illustrates very well why the battles of the Civil War were as a rule barren of results. It was the tactical weakness of the armies, their lack of cohesion, their inability to maintain formations, among other things, that prevented a real decision being reached on the battle ground. And this tactical weakness proceeded mainly from the fact that there was no solid instruction,

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based on carefully framed tactical theories, behind the regimental officers, the higher command, and the staff. To obtain tactical cohesion with even the best trained officers was a difficult enough proposition, as Fritz Hönig had so clearly perceived at Mars-la-Tour. But with an army in which the higher command and the staff had literally had no training at all, and the regimental officers nothing beyond some hasty and superficial barrackyard drills, what could be expected? In Longstreet's advance there was no staff control of any sort, while the brigadier generals seem to have occupied most of their time galloping around trying to find where the units of their brigades had got to! In the upshot they, like their men, naturally reached Chinn's house! <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From Homer Lea's "Valor of Ignorance," I note

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It would not be difficult to pursue further this criticism of the armies engaged in the slow and deadly conflict of the Civil War. But the salient points have been made, and details would merely confuse the issues which will be presented to the reader in the next chapter. It will be best to turn now to the credit side of the Civil War and to see whether, in terms of military organization or art, there is anything to be entered in that column.

The high morale and good fighting qualities of the American citizen produced, as we have seen, some hard, if unskilful, fighting. Generals of great ability came forward, especially on the Southern side. During the last phase

that over 6,000 officers were cashiered or discharged from the Union Army, while over 22,000 resigned! I have not verified these figures.—The lamentable business of the first Bull Run I have described in my “Bull Run—Its Strategy and Tactics.”

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of the war Grant displayed military power and intelligence for the North, while the handling of the Army of the Potomac showed a greatly improved technique in the system of orders and control. Yet in all this there was little more than a natural consequence from the conditions, containing no new instruction.

It was only in one respect that new instruction was to be derived from the war. This was in the last organization of the Army of the Potomac, now a rapidly acting and well controlled body, in which one corps was of special mobility because mounted. In the last campaign Sheridan's command does not play the part of a reserve of cavalry; it does not play the part even of an independent cavalry corps; but it is clearly a corps in the line of Grant's army, a

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corps somewhat reduced in fighting power but greatly increased in moving power. The high mobility of Grant's army as a whole, with this special velocity in one of its corps, is what enabled him, in 1865, to reach Lynchburg before Lee and to terminate the war. The relation of Sheridan's corps to Grant's army constitutes a new departure in the composition of armies, and our one solid contribution to the art of war.

From the time of the Civil War to the present there are more lessons to be learned, but they need not affect the final argument. Our army learned many things in the Spanish war: at first the cost of unpreparedness; then, in Cuba, how not to fight; later, in the Philippines, after a little experience, how to fight on a small scale. This was to the good as far as it went. New

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blood was poured into the army. Those who were behind the scenes did a lot of thinking. And presently army reform, under the wise and patriotic guidance of Mr. Root, began to take shape. We started in to catch up a century or so of military progress. Mr. Root created a General Staff, an institution still viewed with suspicion by the conservatives. An Army War College came into existence; and a reformed Army school at Fort Leavenworth. And all of these were indispensable foundations for the higher control and command of the United States army. But the greatest problem of all was left unsolved, that of the creation of a real United States army, an army fit in its relation to national policy and purposes, adequate for all and any such emergencies as might

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reasonably be perceived on our political horizon. How such an army should be constituted is a question that must now be approached.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE POLICY

**T**HE size of our army is inconsiderable. The last army list shows about 32,000 infantry—say three quarters of an army corps<sup>1</sup>—including the Porto Rico regiment. Our reserve system, which has little in common with those modeled on Scharnhorst's reforms a century ago, is reputed to be able to produce, in a national emergency, an additional 16 men! Then we have the militia. And the militia has been the

<sup>1</sup> The size of army corps and divisions varies; the standards here adopted will be about 42,000 men to an army corps and about 12,500 to a division. The United States has no army corps; but does have, on paper, a faulty divisional organization of a little over 20,000 men to the division.



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grandest asset of our public orators, since Lexington. As a plain fact, however, it is reckoned that the physically fit and slightly trained militia amounts to not over 80,000 men; while our military organization will remain an organization for deliberate murder until things are so adjusted that a militia battalion shall get not less than three months under canvas before being sent to the front. And even at that . . .!

The best things we have are our beginnings of a Staff, our Service Schools, West Point, and a body of capable officers mostly of junior rank who know our weaknesses and could remedy them if they only got a chance. If we withdrew every infantryman from Panama, the Philippines, Honolulu, Porto Rico and Alaska, and massed them together,

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we should still fall considerably short of a single army corps. Germany at this moment is reckoned to have 73 army corps in the field, and Germany is a smaller country than we are, a poorer country, and one for which the future opens less brightly. The army of Montenegro, a country that the State of New Jersey could put in its pocket, is quite the equal if not the superior of our own. Switzerland counts her men by the quarter and half million; while England raises armies a million at a time, in a very doubtful attempt to make up for a long period of neglect and deficiency.

Now we have no problem in terms of millions confronting us; we can get off very much more cheaply than that. But our solution does require the virtual scrapping of our present so-called

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army, and taking a fresh start on a different basis. To tinker with what we have now is merely pursuing the shut-your-eyes course of which Belgium has lately been giving such a lamentable example. Let us not tinker, let us open our eyes to facts, let us look around the world's horizon and consider what are the emergencies we should reasonably anticipate. And then, let us remodel our army to fit those circumstances.

One thing is beyond controversy, which is that the policy of this country is non-aggressive in spirit or theory. But in fact, however, there is in it an element of aggression. This aggressiveness proceeds in part from the Monroe Doctrine and in part from the economic push southwards which has already been noted. We disclaim all aggressiveness and we honestly mean

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what we say, but in spite of ourselves our relations with Spanish America involve the increasing friction of two surfaces one of which is expanding while the other is, in places at least, stationary. Notwithstanding all this we should certainly dismiss from our minds aggressiveness when studying our military needs. We should be concerned only with defense, or questions that may be forced on us.

It has been argued that Germany was a danger. In point of fact she was. Behind her diplomatic effort, for some years past, had been the supreme desire to obtain a naval base in the knot of the trade routes rising north towards London and New York from Gibraltar, the South Atlantic and Panama. For a brief moment she thought she could secure it at Agadir or Casablanca; for

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many years she watched covetously the West Indian Islands; and her relations with Holland and Denmark presented no more difficult aspect than this latent question of the West Indies. Had Belgium owned Curaçao, or St. Thomas, how sharply we should have appreciated the difference in the situation to-day!

The danger was not merely lest Germany should acquire an Atlantic base from which to prosecute her designs; but it was thought by many that she might even undertake land operations against us. Unquestionably plans for such operations exist, though that does not of necessity prove much. It is, however, difficult to conceive any diplomatic understanding or international grouping that would have permitted Germany to embark on such an enter-

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prise. On the other hand, the idea of a raid against New York or Boston could never even have arisen were it not so painfully obvious that we had no means for effective resistance. Assume Germany diplomatically free to cross the sea and able to land her troops,—the rest would be easy. The ifs, however, are many; and in a moment we will consider coast defense and the navy in this connection.

To dispose, first of all, of Germany. Clearly this is not the moment to attach too great importance to any danger which she may be supposed to present. It is too early (December, 1914) to foretell the nature of the settlement after the war; but it is not too early to foretell that the menace, such as it was, of Germany to the American continents is laid on the shelf for some years to

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come. There is therefore no need to measure up our requirements for defense on that standard. For questions far more serious arise in connection with other countries; and in dealing with them we shall, incidentally, more than cover the present case of Germany.

Japan by her present course apparently holds out no prospect of a period of disarmament after the war. She therefore either fears Russia, or intends to profit from the depression of Europe to develop her position in Asia. To forestall Russia she has five, ten or fifteen years in which to break off and organize large sections of northern China. Or if that should prove impracticable she can turn to the Pacific, and there perhaps find more favorable opportunity in our weakness.

The taking of the Philippines from

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Spain may be ranked among the worst military blunders committed by any American government—it is difficult to put the matter more strongly. It is a weak, ex-centric, military position, fundamentally indefensible against any strong transpacific power, but inevitably a magnet to draw troops and ships away from our shores. A popular clamor might at any time result in a weak Administration sending the battle fleet from the Atlantic to Manila. And the result would be instantly to lose for us the incalculable influence our fleet has given us these last ten years in all North Atlantic questions; while at the same moment we should jeopardize, for no adequate purpose, the safety of that fleet at the other end of the world by attaching it to a base far too weak to give it the indispensable minimum of



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support. The islands are together larger than Italy; Luzon is about four times the size of Belgium, and so is Mindanao. To defend, by military means, Luzon, and Mindanao, and the other islands, requires a large force, say two or three army corps of 42,000 men each backed by a considerable native army. With such a force it might be reasonable to develop a great dockyard and arsenal on which a powerful fleet could rest securely and control the surrounding water.<sup>2</sup>

But all such calculations are loose

<sup>2</sup> The only valid defense of the Philippines is naval. This presupposes: 1st, a powerful fleet in the Pacific; 2d, the solid organization of naval bases in the triangle Panama, San Francisco, Honolulu; 3d, the fortification of Guam, whence our fleet could control the Japanese lines to the south. But these stages are successive, and we are far from being able to use Guam; while any attempt to fortify it would tend more than any other single act we could do to cause Japan to declare war. She would be perfectly right.

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and utopian. The price is much too high. The game is not worth the candle. In practice we should inevitably cut below the minimum of safety. And even if we did not, even if we placed in the Philippines twice the force just stated, we should only be running double the risk, for in reality no naval and military force we can place in the islands can constitute a guarantee of local superiority.

What can be done then? Unfortunately we cannot cut the loss. We have undertaken certain obligations; we are bound in honor to make an attempt to carry them out. If we can establish the Philippines as an independent state, so much the better. If we can get an international guarantee of neutrality, for what it is worth, that might be helpful. Meanwhile we are

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bound to stay. But let us stay with a clear view of the danger of the situation, and realizing that the Philippines are a source of weakness and not of strength. With such a view we should keep our naval and military forces in the islands down to the lowest level compatible with day to day requirements. And whatever may happen in the future we must never permit our line of battle ships to be sent to so fatal a spot.

Turning from the Philippines there are several other points at which Japan might strike, California, Alaska, Honolulu; and yet others which, though of interest, will not affect the main argument. Dealing first with California, there does not seem to be sufficient ground for an alarmist view; and some of the same arguments apply in this case as in that of Germany. It is not

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reasonable to suppose that Japan is incapable of perceiving that an attack on California must be a losing game in the long run. Our bulk and economic resources are the undeniable guarantees of our eventual success. A reasonable policy should reject firmly the notion that we must provide for the defense of California from Japanese conquest, which means the creation of an army of at least half a million of men on a peace footing. All we need do is to remove the temptation we now offer Japan by being entirely undefended; and that would in all probability be accomplished if we were able immediately to concentrate three army corps, say 130,000 men, on the Pacific coast. That should be, however, merely the advance force of a greater national army; otherwise even that number of troops might not suffice.

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Turning next to Alaska the problem changes shape. The possibility of a Japanese attempt increases for a number of reasons, among others the advantage of seizing possession of mineral deposits which Japan lacks. On the other hand the contiguity of Alaska to Canada must act as a powerful deterrent so long as the present alliance between Great Britain and Japan is maintained. The control of Alaska's long seaboard depends primarily on the command of the sea. But command of the sea is a precarious thing, apt to be discontinuous, particularly for a country in our peculiar relation to two oceans. On the other hand the garrisoning of Alaska so as to defend it integrally is unthinkable. The solution appears to be the establishment of one strong fortified area on the coast, inex-

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tensive, so as not to demand a large garrison. This central position should be properly related to one or two minor ones suitable for the protection of the main trade routes. Then, with a few thousand troops in garrison, we could always hold the key to Alaska for a few months under adverse conditions, trusting to eventual relief from over sea.

So far it has been possible to leave the navy almost out of consideration. But when we come to Honolulu we can do so no longer. And with Honolulu we reach the real bone of contention, the most serious military problem in our relations with Japan. For Honolulu in the hands of a hostile power is a direct threat to California and the Canal. To protect it, however, is a mixed naval and military proposition. The navy should be strong enough, that is to say

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our dreadnoughts should be sufficiently well supported in dockyard, arsenal, cruiser, flotilla, and local defense equipment, which at present is very far from being the case, to protect the Hawaiian islands. In addition there should be an adequate garrison for the defenses of Honolulu, which, it is generally understood, is a matter of 20,000 men. To place 5,000, or 10,000, or even 15,000 men in fortifications built to require 20,000 men, is folly when our navy cannot control the sea, and would not be very wise even if it could. Better keep troops at home than deliberately hand them over to the enemy. But this particular form of crime is as old as history and has all the respectability that comes from ancient and numerous precedents!

To sum up our survey thus far we

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may say, that Germany may be dismissed as setting a standard for our armaments, but that Japan necessitates our being able to place in the field immediately on notice being given:

In California, 3 army corps... 130,800

In Honolulu and Alaska say.. 20,000

To which add garrisons of Pan-

ama and the Philippines say 23,600

---

174,400

And this is an estimate that makes no provision for either maintaining those numbers or expanding them; nor does it make allowance for the army's other duties.

When we face south, beyond the Rio Grande, the problem once more changes character. The events of the last two years, and the whole current of



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our recent history, point to two grave possibilities: one is that we may have to make an expedition to the city of Mexico, the other is that we may eventually have to police the whole of that distracted country. These are undoubted possibilities, and the sole question here is to reply, by the light of military history, to the question: What force should we require to deal with those problems?

In the case of Mexico we cannot, as in the case of Japan, base our calculation on anything that approaches a certain knowledge of the forces we should have to face. Precise elements are deficient; but we have analogies, precedents, probabilities; and on these we must build, not with certainty, but to the best of our judgment.

We know, for instance, that one of

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the main difficulties of Lord Roberts in South Africa, and one that consumed numbers, was the keeping of about 1800 miles of rail protected from guerrillas. We also know that there is something like 25,000 miles of rail in Mexico. If we were to multiply up on that basis we should conclude that we would require between three and four millions of troops to control Mexico. Fortunately, however, this is not just a statistical question. For we also know that where the Boer had consistently high morale, the Mexican has unstable morale. It is clear from the recent fighting that under a good leader the Mexican may show up very well. We also know from Winfield Scott's experience and from many other facts, that Mexican morale may be broken, and once broken is not easily recovered.

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We know about the topography of a country in which campaigning is difficult. Our General Staff probably knows the real facts as to how many men the periodically budding candidates for the Presidential throne of Mexico have actually had in the field; but for the layman to estimate them from newspaper exaggerations is virtually impossible. Out of such elements as these, somehow or other, an opinion must be formulated for what it is worth.

Estimating the troops necessary for a march from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, together with the occupation of the Tampico district, one might say, in the first place, that the cheap and effective way to do the business is decisively, that is in overwhelming force. When one considers the topography, the nature of the railroads between

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Vera Cruz and the capital (424 and 474 kilometers), one inclines to the belief that from 50,000 to 60,000 regulars would be necessary for the advance and the occupation of necessary points. According to circumstances a greater or less number of line of communication troops, would have to be employed on the railroad from Vera Cruz to Mexico City; possibly a couple of militia divisions would suffice. On some such basis as that we should be reasonably certain of making quick work of an advance to Mexico City, without great waste of time, money, or lives. It is quite possible, however, that the thing could be done with less force. It is even conceivable, with Mexican morale what it is, that a dashing general and 15,000 men might do the whole business. But we are too powerful a nation to

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trifle with our responsibilities; a sober and safe estimate is wisdom in the long run.

An expedition to Mexico City might, however, prove insufficient; it might become necessary to settle down to a pacification of the whole country. This job would probably, and properly, be turned over to a Mexican mounted police as rapidly as such a force could be constituted; but that would take time. The problem would doubtless be less difficult in some parts of the country than in others. In any case we should be able to train militia and volunteer forces for a few months before settling them down to the work of keeping the peace in the districts we had succeeded in clearing up. So that the problem is one not merely of the number of troops, but of the number of

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troops over three, six, nine months, and for either first line or second line duties.

No data could possibly avail to formulate a precise scheme to fit this problem. But it seems reasonable to say that we should require not less than three army corps of regulars in the field at the outset, with the possibility of a considerable increase within three months. Then we should require at the very least three army corps of volunteers or militia, available in three months, with as many more available in six months. In all 130,000 regulars, rising to double; and the same force of volunteers but with a three months' time allowance beyond the regulars.

Summing up once more, what do we find as a result. We require:

For the garrisons of our possessions, Alaska, Panama,

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Honolulu, Porto Rico, the Philippines, say one army corps .....	43,600
For national emergencies, im- mediately available, 3 army corps .....	130,800
	<hr/>
	174,400

This force to be doubled in six months.

In three months from a declara- tion we require three army corps of volunteers which should be in existence as mili- tia during peace time. Mili- tia .....	130,800
	<hr/>

Peace total, regular and militia.305,200

This force to be doubled in six months.

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Doubling these forces would  
make available a war total, in  
six months, of .....610,400

To this figure must be added the Coast Defense troops. Coast defense brings us to an interesting point though one of minor importance. The Coast Defense theory, under which vast sums of public money have been and are being spent, is largely absurd. It is the one part of our military preparations that is being over instead of underdone; and it is quite time that the matter were investigated out of its present dangerous groove.

In the first place "Coast" defense means nothing at all. We can't defend our coast; nor have we got to defend it, at all events, not in the terms of our Coast Defense theory. We have either to prevent a raid against one of our



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ports, in which case we are dealing with port or harbor defense at most; or else we have to meet the attack of an expeditionary force, the landing of which will not take place, for obvious enough reasons, at any of our ports, but in between ports, along some sheltered strip of coast. Now to protect our coasts against such an eventuality and at all possible points by shore defenses, is ridiculous; the enterprise is gigantic. Half the effort entailed, directed into other channels, would leave us the greatest military power in the world.

On the other hand the mere protection of our harbors against a raiding cruiser or two should not be a very complicated or difficult matter. Even New York, our greatest port, could probably be defended with complete

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success against a raid without a single one of the formidable guns placed in the shore batteries. With such a narrow and difficult channel a half dozen destroyers and a couple of mine fields with a few shore guns would make the entrance perfectly secure.

In any case this question is one for experts; and for a mixed board of experts, naval and military. It is worse than ridiculous to continue dealing with it on a basis of reassuring formulas about defending our "Coast," formulas that cloak false military principles and the squandering of public money. The danger of an attack by a raiding cruiser on a port can be solved simply and economically by a competent board of experts. The landing of an expeditionary force can be dealt with in only one way, which is by an immediate con-

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centration of equal or superior numbers of troops. To protect every landing place on our coast lines is a fantastic proposal.

On the whole we may safely cut down our coast defense force by a half or more. Let us call it 10,000 men, and add it to the previous total. Adding this item we find that our national needs for defense amount in round numbers to 184,400 régulars and 130,800 effective militia, on a peace footing. We further note that each force should be capable of being doubled as rapidly as possible in a national emergency.

This brings us to the question of organization, which in the present state of our army, is the most urgent question before the country. We have peace; the world may rest quiet for a few years; that is an opportunity not to be

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neglected for putting through the remodeling of our army. It is an imperative national necessity; it is far more important, at bottom, than any mere increase of numbers.

## CHAPTER IX

### ORGANIZATION

**S**INCE the period when the de Gribeauval-Bonaparte theories got into play, which is quite a while ago, the division has been the field unit of armies, for it combines the three arms and is tactically self sufficient. Our progressive country has recently caught up with this more than century old idea, thanks to the energy of our late Chief-of-Staff, General Wood. We have a divisional organization; the trouble is we have not got the divisions to put into the organization. For the present purpose it will be safe to ignore it, therefore, and to proceed on the assumption,

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not so far removed from the fact, that the U. S. army has not got a divisional organization at all, and that we are starting with clear foundations:

A division should consist of:

Infantry: two brigades;

each brigade of six battalions;

each battalion of 800 men .. 9,600

Cavalry: one battalion ..... 800

Artillery: ten batteries <sup>1</sup> ..... 1,200

Engineer and other services... 800

---

Total ..... 12,400

An army corps should consist of three divisions, and an additional cavalry division (or double division) of eight battalions, or 6,400 men, giving the total for an army corps of 43,600. Let

<sup>1</sup> The proportion and weight of batteries must be reconsidered after the close of the present war. The above is merely a formal estimate of no real value.

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us now look more closely at the adjustment in the principal arms.

Of infantry we require, on a peace footing, 12 battalions per division, that is for 12 divisions 144 battalions in all. But we require these immediately, that is in time of peace and at full strength; while we require to raise as many more men by expansion in case of war. What is the best way to do it?

The answer is to create a framework which we can expand, filling the ranks of two battalions per regiment in peace and of four in war. This can be accomplished by creating a regimental organization of five battalions, or a total of 72 regiments, an increase of 42 on our present establishment. Battalions 1 and 2 are the peace footing battalions; 3 is the territorial depot-battalion or half battalion; 4 and 5 are the reserve

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war battalions, non-existent in time of peace. In a great emergency even more battalions could be formed from the depots. The working of this system would be as follows:

The third battalion is the regimental headquarters and depot, fixed conveniently for recruiting in some large center of population; for it is essential to relate the army to the population, and not to keep it in out of the way corners as though we were ashamed of it. At the regimental headquarters would be centralized the administrative work of the whole regiment; the first training of the recruit;<sup>2</sup> the drafting of men to the field battalions according to requirements; the storing of the reserve equipment; the calling in and making

<sup>2</sup> This has drawbacks, as Colonel Morrison points out in his admirable little book, "Training Infantry"; but every system is a compromise.



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ready the reservists if called up for service; the forming of the 4th and 5th battalions in case of expansion in time of war. The depot battalion must be strong in its administrative and training staff, but may without danger be quite weak in numbers, as its function is to organize, equip, and feed the other battalions of the regiment but never itself to take the field. It therefore gives elasticity to the regiment as a whole, taking up the slackness when recruiting is bad, while maintaining the 1st and 2nd battalions to a proper level, and in war time the 4th and 5th.

But how, it will be asked, are these fourth and fifth battalions going to come into existence? Where are the men and where are the officers coming from? The answer as to the men is that there will normally always be a

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percentage of recruits working their way in; that this percentage of recruits will necessarily increase in war time, though it is not desirable that this increase be too great or too rapid. To the recruits must be added reservists.

For some years the War Department and the General Staff have been pretty well agreed that reservists are needed. The question is, how to get them? The matter is largely one of bargaining. How long do you need to hold the soldier to the colors? Some answer as little as one year; General Wotherpoon, in his report as Chief of Staff, demands three. How much pay will induce the soldier to join for so long? How much will induce him to remain liable to rejoin, in an emergency, and over what period of years will he agree to be liable? A working compromise

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of some sort has got to be established. Experience has proved well enough that, other things being equal, a soldier trained four years is measurably superior to a soldier trained only three years. The slightly trained unit, like the English territorial regiment or the slightly inferior American militia, cannot be used under three to six months, save possibly as line of communications troops in an emergency, though that is for many reasons unadvisable. This again is fundamentally influenced by the higher or lower standard of training set for the various grades of officers. Somewhere, a working compromise between the quality and quantity of the soldier and the financial burden must be found.

Assuming for the sake of the argument the proposal of General Wotherpoon as a basis for bargaining with the

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enlisted man, we should have the regulars three years with the colors, and then passed along into a reserve from which they could be summoned for a term of years to rejoin in case of emergency. This reserve would come in to the regimental depots and, added to a proportion of recruits, furnish men enough for the 4th and 5th battalions. Then comes the question of the officers.

One of the most emphatic lessons of all military history is that a regiment is about as good as its officers, a fact which our public has never realized. Our statesmen, indeed, have always been inclined to act on the opposite assumption, and produced ghastly butcheries in consequence. The vital point in establishing the quality of an army is to get enough good officers to train the men,

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and to lead battalions and companies. How are they to be obtained for our 4th and 5th battalions? The best way is to have with the first three battalions, on peace footing, more officers than are actually needed, and to keep a considerable number of officers learning the higher branches of their profession at the Fort Leavenworth school and at the Army War College, who would naturally join the troops again if a state of war occurred. If, for example, the 1st and 2nd battalions had each of them eight companies (or four double companies) and on the calling up of reservists cut down their companies to four only; then four captains from each battalion could be passed back to the depot to take over the reservist companies as they were completed for the 4th and 5th battalions. If in peace time not less

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than one captain and two lieutenants were detached from each battalion to the Fort Leavenworth schools, and if each colonel saw that every captain frequently handled a double company or even a half battalion, the disadvantage of doubling a captain's command for war service would probably not prove very serious.

Turning to the cavalry, the requirement is to provide twelve battalions for divisional service, about as many more for scattered service, and four cavalry divisions of eight battalions each, in all 54 battalions. Before dealing with their organization, however, it is better to recall with great emphasis the special effectiveness of Sheridan's corps in the Army of the Potomac. The conditions of campaigning in most parts of the American Continent are highly favor-

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able to this sort of command. And it is no exaggeration to say that one army corps with a division of cavalry, *trained in peace time to manœuver as a unit*, would in many cases be more effective than two army corps with merely a few cavalry battalions brought together for the first time.

Mounted riflemen are cheap and quick to train; and for that reason well adapted as a model for the divisional cavalry of militia divisions. For the regular cavalry the dragoon, who is a mounted rifleman trained to the use of the sword, will answer our purpose best. For the militia it is not practical to attempt to create independent cavalry divisions, nor in fact cavalry at all; and we must confine ourselves to enough mounted riflemen to complete militia divisional organizations.

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For the regulars we require, therefore, 27 regiments, twelve more than at present. Each of these would be organized like the infantry with a depot battalion or squadron, two field battalions, and a framework of officers and reservists sufficient to give at least one more battalion for war purposes. Each field battalion should have a battery of two mountain guns, two mountain howitzers, and machine guns; while each cavalry division should have attached to it not less than four batteries of field guns. Although the provision made for cavalry is not on quite the same level as that for the infantry, it is probable that the reserve and depot system, if efficiently handled, might turn out rather more troops than indicated above, while volunteering and the raising of rough rider organizations



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would be of material service in furnishing a sufficient cavalry arm.

Artillery is the great auxiliary arm. To render proper service its numbers and material must be ascertained by the light of experience in proportion and relation to the other arms. This is a difficult problem for the best technical experts. It is not proposed to say anything further here than that the best proportions should be fixed, the best material should be obtained, and a proper reserve both of material and of ammunition should be maintained. The engineering and other minor services of the army will for similar reasons be left out of the argument.

Coming back to the salient facts, we have one more which for importance must rank on the same level as the depot and reserve organizations of the army,

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and that is training. The highest trained army is the best. That training is of troops, of company officers, of field officers and of the higher command. And the higher branches of the art of war constitute one of the most intensely difficult branches of study in the whole field of human knowledge. Lack of training and ignorance of the higher leading of troops has cost more than one great nation in modern times some of the most bitter pages of its history.

Our new model army must not only be territorially distributed, but it must have proper instruction; and for that the minimum requirements are these: West Point should be enlarged and another military college should be founded. Some point in the West would seem indicated, and Colorado has

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much to recommend it for this purpose. Between the ages of 26 and 32 a large proportion of junior officers should be sent to the Army Service Schools for either a short or a long course (one or two years) of advanced study. A proportion of officers obtaining high grades in this course should be sent, after returning to regimental duty for at least two years, to the Army War College at Washington, for a further period of advanced study. The staff of these two institutions should be strengthened in every way possible, and made semi-permanent. Our army administration must place its emphasis on high training instead of sacrificing the thinking and organizing processes to blind routine as it does at present.

We further require camps of instruction, or perhaps better still summer

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manœuvres. Suitable ground should be acquired for the continuous training of officers and men in the handling of brigades and divisions both of infantry and of cavalry. It might even be advisable to have a second camp, on the Pacific Coast, for the assembling for periodic training of another division of infantry. In no other way can real efficiency be attained. Let those who doubt this study the almost incredible details of Bazaine's attempts to move his columns through the city of Metz, or of McClellan's farcical efforts to get his army up the Peninsula. A few well schooled Prussian staff captains could have handled the whole business without the least trouble.

In the above sketch of a new model army a good many points have been left untouched. But it must be clear to

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the reader that this is nothing more than an effort to indicate the broad lines of a specific policy. Some details are clearly open to adjustment. Others may be assumed from the premises, for instance, that the organization of the militia and the training of its officers should be on lines corresponding as nearly as possible to those for the Regulars. To take another matter: if we form so many batteries of artillery, available within such a period, we must obviously be provided with the ammunition that shall make those batteries effective. In one way it seems needless to make the remark. Yet such is our tradition in such matters that it has its importance.

I realize only too well the fate of a book like this in many quarters. It

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would not be difficult to write a biting criticism of it, nor to guess which editor might be most eager to print it. No great effort is required to imagine the eloquent indignation with which the pacifist orator will denounce it. The politician, who is arraigned in it, will naturally condemn it; or perhaps view it as an embarrassment; or, at best, a means for embarrassing his opponents. Unfortunately many of the public-minded, ignorant of history, war, and international politics, will not derange the systems of their minds by even attempting to understand it. Hostility and inertia loom large on the horizon. Yet many who read it will, I know, realize that facts carefully observed have been placed before them, from which only moderate and reasonable deductions have been drawn; and for no

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purpose save to serve the country. Let us hope that all who understand will support those few gentlemen who in Congress and elsewhere are striving to improve our national defenses.

To say that war is stupid and wicked may be true; most people nowadays are agreed on this point. But it does not dispose of the question. It is only in the kindergarten text that it takes two to make a quarrel, as every page of history, ancient and modern demonstrates; and we have some very recent cases. If war is stupid and wicked, to encourage others to make war by remaining defenseless is stupid, wicked and criminal. And to avoid that crime it is not necessary to threaten, it is not necessary to arm to the teeth. We have merely to raise our army to a standard that will place it about on a

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level with those of the second or third rate European powers, say somewhere between those of Holland and of Roumania. To imagine that this would be a departure from our old-time policy, that it would alarm Europe, lose us our moral power, and so forth, is cheap clap-trap for very ignorant and foolish audiences. It would, of course, have precisely the opposite effect. It would show European statesmen that, unlike Belgium, we can face the issues of peace and war, and that if a grave problem, like that of Mexico, should be thrust upon us, we are capable of solving it, which now appears quite doubtful.

There is at present an outcry that we should investigate the Army. Is it worth while, poor thing? It does its best; it generally has done what was possible under hopeless conditions. Its



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feebleness is known to all and may be estimated at sight. What topsy-turvidom to investigate the innocent sufferer and to leave uninvestigated the source of all the evil, the body with which lies the responsibility for the army's condition, that is Congress! There is the point at which investigation is necessary, and in fact urgent.

THE END









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